Foreign Service Days

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

COREY VENNING

Interviewed by: Self

FOREIGN SERVICE DAYS

CURRICULUM VITAE Corey Venning

I was born in Spanish Fork, Utah on July 4, 1924, and lived all over the Mountain West during childhood, while the family accompanied my father, a highway engineer for the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads. I went to convent schools. In fourth grade my introduction to the subject of geography on the one hand and the visit of a glamorous aunt who lived in Paris on the other gave me an abiding determination to see and experience the larger world. Soon thereafter the conflict between the pro-Franco and pro-Mussolini sentiments of my parish clergy and the prominent activities of this beloved aunt and her European husband in support of the Spanish Loyalists produced a “cognitive dissonance” that I believe issued in an equally abiding interest in international politics.

I also wanted to be an opera singer. I spent a year at the University of Idaho, then transferred to Berkeley, where I learned I had all the requirements for an opera career except voice, musical and dramatic gifts, and chutzpah. My college career was cut short by a wartime marriage at eighteen and the birth of a son shortly thereafter. While living in Boise, Idaho with him and my family I did courses at the local junior college and by correspondence.

In 1945 I got a scholarship to the University of Chicago. Living at the International House there, I made friends and acquaintances from many foreign parts, and learned a bit about their assorted outlooks and ways of life. In 1948 I was granted the A.M. in international relations.

Meanwhile I had taken the Foreign Service examinations and in 1949 the Foreign Service rather unenthusiastically commissioned me a Foreign Service Officer. My son and I spent two and a half years in Bombay, where I was vice consul, then I was posted to Athens as second secretary of embassy. In late 1954, disgusted with the supine way in which the State Department and the Foreign Service responded to Joseph McCarthy's attacks, and convinced that they would always be fair game for any demagogue and that a diplomatic career was therefore not an attractive prospect, I resigned from the Service. I enjoyed consular and diplomatic work except for the constant and rather boring official social life it entailed.

On returning to the United States we lived in Charlotte, N.C., where I worked as a stockbroker. Unfortunately I am the world's worst salesman. After another unsuccessful marriage, in 1956, and two more children, I went back to school in 1962, first at the University of Oregon and then back to Chicago, where in 1968 I was granted a Ph.D. in political science, with specialties in international politics and political philosophy (never did get a bachelor's degree). I had become a member of the faculty of Loyola University of Chicago in 1965, and remained there until 1986. As with most academics, my work involved teaching, research and publishing, and some participation in public and community affairs. The younger children and I did some European travel during our year and a half at Loyola's Rome Center, and I also traveled in North and South America and in 1985 had a month in Japan with my daughter, who was employed by the Japanese government.

I also kept occupied with being a single mother, writing a non-academic book, The Single Grandmother (having become one in 1966; I now have two granddaughters, ages 29 and

4#, and two grandsons, ages 13 and 1#), and remodeling a large and beautiful apartment which I sold when the children left for school and smaller quarters were called for. The next apartment burned; I had better luck with subsequent ones. Since leaving school I have moved house twenty-nine times, always swearing that the next time will be feet first. Moving never gets any easier!

After taking early retirement in 1986 I enjoyed several delightful years of studying subjects I had always loved but never had serious time for — Greek, Latin, mathematics, science. Studies were cut short in 1990 by the only serious illness I have ever had, ovarian cancer. Fortunately it came on fast and has been partially arrested by surgery and chemotherapy. My daughter says I scare the cells to death. After retirement, with the family spread between Boise and Tokyo I was a bit “out in left field” in Chicago, and I no longer relished sweltering in summer and digging out the car in winter. So in June 1992, at the urgings of my children, one batch of whom live here, I moved to Olympia, Washington, a delightful place. At the behest of my children and grandchildren I have been writing (slowly; it's been great fun living it but it's an awful bore writing about it) a memoir of my life and times.

PRELIMINARIES

My parents had not been enthusiastic about my returning to school in 1945. They thought a young woman in my circumstances — a young married woman and a mother, with a divorce in prospect — should keep her good job as a legal secretary, perhaps cultivate her music, even learn interior decorating or fashion design, and plan to marry again. But after a year or so they became reconciled to my studies. These, especially the courses I had with Hans Morgenthau, were invaluable to me later in the Foreign Service.

In Fall 1947 I sat for the written examination for the Foreign Service. I hadn't really studied for it, and finances did not permit anything like a Georgetown cram course. In those days this exam was in seven parts, including a foreign language part, spread over three and a half days. (No more difficult, however, than the much shorter samples I saw later

on). In that amount of time the exams could cover a fair bit of territory. One had to get a weighted grade of 70 to pass. I was amazed that I got a 91 in economics, and only a 67 in American history, a disappointing 71 in expository writing and an even more disappointing 77 in French, over which I had labored so long and hard. I remember only two specific questions: a multiple choice in which I managed to identify Walter Reuther as an official of the National Association of Manufacturers, and a language identification one in which, seeing the Chinese passage set in upside down, I turned the page round and wrote “Chinese” upside down. My weighted grade was 80. It put me well into the 90th percentile of all who had passed the exam, and way ahead of the seven others from UC who were taking it, all pals of mine and all males. My passing of course was generally conceded, even by me, to mean nothing. My pals would pass the orals and I, being female and for heaven's sake having a child, would not. The eight of us had a good time in the intervals between exam sittings, arguing over lunch and dinner about what ought to have been the answer to this or that question and exhibiting a lot of blas# ill-based wisdom about life in the Foreign Service.

In June 1948 I took on the overnight coach from Chicago to Washington for the Foreign Service oral examination. My seat-mate was also a U. of C. student but one whom I hadn't met before. He learned that I had done my thesis on the Indonesian question, and I learned that his mother worked in that area in the State Department. I don't know why I didn't pick up on this, ask him for an introduction. Perhaps I pictured her as a clerical worker. More likely it was just my usual lifelong obtuseness in sensing opportunities in the job market. At any rate we parted without exchanging addresses or plans to get together again.

That evening I went to dinner with some of the others from UC who had come for their orals. All were consoling me that I had no chance of success, given my sex and motherhood. I myself had no real thought of passing the oral, for the same reason. But

I imagined that the examiners were important people and intended to make a good impression on them and then later on try to get a good job through them.

So after a decent dinner and a good night's sleep I put on the nice little gray Chanel suit Mama had made me (she could do a good job of dressmaking when she really tried) and hied myself off to the examination. Once there I knew for sure I was out of the running: there in the waiting room with me was another candidate, also female. She was older, in her late twenties, cool and efficient looking, and had several years' work experience at professional level in Washington and abroad. I knew it was, if anything, a choice between her and me, and the outcome was obvious. We chatted a bit, and decided that whatever the outcome for either of us, we would dine together that evening to celebrate the end of a trying day.

Nonetheless I soldiered on, waiting during the hour her examination took. Most of the orals were said to take only twenty minutes or half an hour, but of course women would be examined more closely.

Then it was my turn. My examination took two hours. I honestly think the examiners were enjoying themselves. This was no routine affair. I could not be needled: asked if I thought my being a woman might hinder me in diplomatic work, I replied that Yes, indeed it would, should I be sent to Saudi Arabia, but should the Service send me to Paris I might well be at an advantage. And the questions took unexpected turns. President Truman had just denounced the present Congress as the worst in U.S. history. Did I not think this was an intemperate remark? President Truman was always frank, I said, and his difficulties with a Republican-dominated Congress might well make it seem the worst to him. Well, my questioner continued, what did I think? I just didn't think in terms of worst and best; it seemed to me that the President wanted to accomplish things his opponents didn't want accomplished and vice versa. Well, then, Mrs. Sanderson, let's compare it with some past Congress, say the Reconstruction Congress after the Civil War; which do you think history will judge the worst? Now I had no idea of the politics of these examiners, or whether

they agreed with each other. So I decided the most distant one would be safest: I chose the Reconstruction Congress. Why? Because it left permanent scars of division on the nation; we don't yet know the outcome of this current Congress. Well, Mrs. Sanderson, who were the moving lights in the Reconstruction Congress? Thaddeus Stevens and Charles Sumner. Now which of them would you rather meet? Oh, Sumner of course. Why? “Because he would be the better conversationalist I think.” At which point the table burst into laughter, and my questioner conceded that yes, Sumner had been a gentleman, as Stevens had not.

And so it went for two rather exhausting (to me) hours. Then another wait. My rival was still there, not having yet been called in for the verdict. When she was called in, she emerged soon and happy: she had passed! Then it was my turn.

I entered the office of the chief examiner. Through his walrus mustache and with a lugubrious air he asked me to sit down, then after a long pause said slowly and sadly, “Mrs. Sanderson, I have to tell you that you have passed the Foreign Service oral examination — but why don't you get married?” Then was invented the excuse that worked so beautifully until I blew it with Bill Venning: “Oh, but you see I am divorced. And I am a Roman Catholic.”

It was a triumphant dinner my “rival” and I gave ourselves. I am not sure now, but I believe she was Carol Blaise, who remained in the Service for a long and distinguished career.

Subsequently there was a physical examination, during which it was learned I have an unusually fast pulse, and the security check as far as I know continued for the duration of my Foreign Service career. Old high school friends and others must at some point have suspected there must indeed be some fire to account for all the smoke of repeated visits by the F.B.I.

It would be some time before the Foreign Service class was called, and my money would last only a couple of weeks at best. So the day after the examination I began my job

search. I needed a job — any job — right away; my slender resources would last only a few weeks, and first government paychecks were always delayed. Fortunately jobs weren't hard to find in Washington then. Within a few days I was typing away at the National Academy of Sciences, at a salary netting $260 per month. It was quiet and pleasant place. Scientific academicians seemed to me to be diffident elderly gentlemen with beautiful manners. So nice were they that later on, well after I had left the job, they allowed me and Robin to view General Pershing's majestic funeral procession down Constitution Avenue from the balcony of their beautiful building fronting on it.

The other day I was griping at myself for being so wound up, when suddenly it occurred to me that, since July 1947, I have packed up and moved the bulk of my stuff and changed dwelling places twelve time, I have had five different jobs, I have finished school, gotten the divorce, had three major and rather stormy romances, and sweated out the Foreign Service deal.... At least it's never dull.

(letter to family, July 26, 1948)I was having a good time, as usual. About a month after I got to Washington I was invited to a pleasant Sunday afternoon garden party. There I met Charles Stelle, and on learning he headed up the Far Eastern Section of the State Department's research office, mentioned my thesis on the Indonesian question. “Are you the girl Tully Holt met on the train to Washington a while back? We've been looking all over town for you!”

Never mind that I hadn't been to Indonesia, or for that matter anywhere else outside the United States. People who knew anything about Indonesia were in the kind of scarce supply someone alluded to during the furor preceding our taking over the Philippine Islands at the turn of the century:

“Two weeks ago they didn't know whether the Philippines were islands or sardines!” Stelle and Claire Holt, who headed the Indonesia subsection in his shop, wanted me as a research analyst. It could not, of course, be a regular civil-service appointment,

which would involve a lot of tests, months of bureaucratic folderol, and no doubt my being trumped by someone who knew nothing about Indonesia but had a “5-point” or “10-point” advantage because he was a veteran. But a two-month temporary appointment could be arranged. The two months could in all likelihood be extended indefinitely, at least until my Foreign Service appointment came through.

So on August 9 I began that job. I was delighted. It was the first professional-level job I had ever had, it was in foreign affairs — and it paid quite a bit better than secretarial work, perhaps a net of $300 per month. I loved the job, very much liked the people.

For the first time since I started this job, I haven't anything pressing — so shall take a bit of time off to write a letter I've been wanting to. Actually, my previous background in Indonesian affairs is all that has saved me.... ordinarily an analyst spends from three to five weeks reading and getting caught up on background material. But because of my boss's going on vacation last Friday, I had to pitch right in with the work. It has had the same general effect, though, as I find that because I do have work on a number of specific topics, and must prepare the materials, I have to study them quite closely, so in effect am perhaps getting better 'background training' than I would were I to sit down and do nothing but read for a month. The job is really fascinating, and I can think of no better preparation for a Foreign Service assignment in the area, which I am hoping for. (to family, August 19, 1948).

The temporary appointment was indeed extended for another two months. After that, possibly because of limits on the number of renewals a single such appointment could have, I worked across the hall in the Korea section for the remainder of the period before my Foreign Service class was called.

In these jobs I did many short reports and a number of larger ones, either as sole author or in collaboration with others. I am afraid this work went quite unread in the “action” areas of the Department. For all the late wartime dustups between Roosevelt and Churchill over the

British Empire (i.e., over India), I think attitudes toward the “little hot countries” governed by the French and Dutch were different. And in 1948, China excepted, East Asia had not nearly the priority in foreign policy thinking that Europe — the “civilized” part of the world — had.

I had access to classified material, including various intelligence sources on the spot. There weren't many. A main one from Indonesia seemed to be some variety of European national, “an informed source in Batavia with connections to local political circles.” From these reports I derived a mental picture of an easygoing gentleman sitting on his verandah sipping gin-and-tonics and apparently accepting at face value whatever his informants offered. It seemed to me these informants were at most two or three, not representative of any kind of spectrum and possibly eager to say what would please. [This certainly fitted one of the major “sources” relied upon by my seniors in Bombay.] Thus for the first, but by no means the last, time I began to hope that behind all this “secret” and otherwise classified activity and “information” we had some sort of real undercover intelligence undertakings going. Alas, when I learned years later that we did, and had had, I also found that “operations” had overshadowed “intelligence”, which properly speaking is information, not the “dirty tricks,” secret wars, and so on, that have cost us the almost heroic image the United States once had with major independence movements in the Eastern Hemisphere at least, and which left us with all sorts of other troubles as well.

Work in the Korea section was more routinized, although I did several reports there as well. We assumed North Korea was firmly under Soviet control. In our section we didn't think much of South Korean President Syngman Rhee, either. We took due note of the fairly frequent military sallies launched by one side or the other across the 38th parallel. But Korea seemed fairly boring at the time.

Until we got a house I had been living out of a suitcase, and the house was on short lease. So as soon as the State Department job became a reality I wrote the family that they should address mail to me to my office. Then for nearly a month I heard nothing from

Boise. Finally, desperate, I telephoned (long distance, like telegrams, was reserved for major news, usually bad, such as death). Mama and Daddy assured me that all was well, and that they had written several times. Shortly thereafter arrived on my desk a great pile of personal mail. It had been left on the desk of the other Elizabeth B. Sanderson who worked for the Department, and who had been on temporary oversees duty for several weeks. On looking in the phone book I found three Elizabeth Sandersons — none of them me, since I had arrived after the newest phone books did. Aha! this explained the complaints of friends — and of beaux! for heaven's sake — that they couldn't reach me by phone. I called the other Eliz. B's, asked them to forward calls that weren't for them. None ever did. Then my bank got me into a mess of confusion (this was before the days of numbered checking accounts) with one of the others. At this point I decided to use “Corey” instead of “Elizabeth,” and it has stuck ever since. Its sexual ambiguity had been quite useful, too, on occasion.

Five-year-old Robin had a goodly share of self-confidence:

The other day I heard one of Robin's cohorts call him a “baby” (cohort being eight years old). Robin: “I'm not either! I'm going all the way home to Boise this summer and then my mommy and I going overseas in a big boat with two swimming pools and I can speak Chinese!”(letter to family, April 1949).

Robin spent the summer with his grandparents in Boise. Both before he left Washington and thereafter my letters to Mama and Daddy incorporate a running argument about my going abroad, and more particularly about my taking him off to strange faraway places:

I agree with you that the chances for promotion are best in the home office, having seen it happen in your bureau and noticing similar things here. But in this line of business one just doesn't get very far without overseas experience, and the Foreign Service being a separate thing from Departmental Service (it isn't on civil service incidentally) and for a number of reasons being a Foreign Service Officer (especially a woman one, since

there have only been 15 others altogether) carries a lot of prestige. So I intend to stay in Foreign Service for a few years at least. Out of our first fifteen years in the service, we have to spend at least 3 in the States on departmental detail.... Also I agree that it wouldn't be too desirable for Robin if he had to spend all his time in foreign schools and general environment. However, there are few places I would likely be sent where there is no American or at least English or French school [I was not forgetting Daddy's Francophilism]. Most consulates are located in larger cities, and of course all embassies are in the capitals of the countries. I doubt if Foreign Service would consider sending a woman to some of the really backward places, since the social system of those countries being what it is a woman could be of little use to the Foreign Service. On the other hand, if as he gets older I feel he needs to come back here for any reason, he can always do so, and go to school here. But now, when he is still quite young, I think you are quite right — we do need each other and need to be with each other most of the time anyway (to Daddy, June 2, 1949).

My letters home during these years of 1948 and 1949 are full of information and enclosures about the Foreign Service. I was at pains that Mama and Daddy should understand what the Foreign Service was. It was not “spying,” I was not going to become a Mata Hari. The Foreign Service was an important and prestigious arm of the American government. It was not a communist or subversive outfit. This effort of mine was necessary. In those days few people not connected with international affairs had any notion of what diplomacy was, or what diplomats did (most of the time I think they still haven't), and the demagogic blackening of the American Foreign Service that culminated in the McCarthy hearings was already under way. I also reported that, contrary to the original line taken by the gentlemen who had conducted my oral examination, I was assured our post would be neither unpleasant nor dangerous, and that junior diplomats usually spent a fair portion of their first decade on assignment in Washington.

These efforts of mine may have succeeded in part, but they didn't really like the idea of my, and more particularly of Robin's, going overseas. I did my none too effective best to calm their fears and get them to see such things more the way I did.

One clipping I sent them, though, may have been in the nature of an unwitting coup. It was a description of the assiduous attempts by Service policymakers to stock foreign posts with first-class female clerical personnel who were also ladies. This with the thought on the part of the powers that be that these young women would make good American wives for junior Foreign Service officers. I wouldn't be clerical, but maybe there was hope after all? I did not encourage any such hopes. At bottom she, and I think Daddy as well, were fairly bursting with pride over my Foreign Service appointment.

This had its drawbacks. I had to beg for a little discretion. I was often at pains in my letters to indicate that my opinions were “confidential.” This wasn't quite enough. I had written a long letter home, opposing the idea that universities be prohibited from exposing “young minds” to Marxism and other subversive ideas, as certain quarters wanted to do and as apparently Mama and Daddy agreed should be done. I seem also to have written something about tax rules for FSO's. I have no record of this in a letter. Mama may just have assumed the job to be tax-free. My next letter was in response to her answering note:

I am going to get the unpleasant part of this letter over with first, and can then go on to nicer things. In your last letter you have this: “Thought your last letter so good I sent a couple of copies to Martha Shoulders, reporter for Statesman. Noticed they came out in today's issue. Shall send it to you. Guess a little publicity won't hurt you.”

Please read the enclosed clipping from the blue book of the Foreign Service regulations, a copy of which I sent you. I suppose the letter you refer to is the one in which I discussed Hutchins' speech. It doesn't matter, however, as it is obvious that anything Corey B. Sanderson has to say has significance in the Statesman only because CBS is a Foreign

Service Officer. I know you did it because you are proud of me, but you won't be proud of me if I get into trouble, and the combination of possible intent to evade the income tax and violation of one of the most strictly enforced of all the Foreign Service Regulations, right off the bat, looks a bit jaundice to me.

I think in view of the newness of all this and particularly of my absolute lack of knowledge or suspicion that the thing was going to find its way into print, Foreign Service will overlook it if I notify them of it and explain the situation.... I am afraid not to report it, because ten years from now some idiot might see it and use it against me — it happens that way. And hereafter ANYTHING I WRITE YOU MUST BE KEPT PRIVATE. I am sorry if I sound cross.....[but] don't you think it's more suitable to keep our opinions to ourselves, in view of Daddy's work and mine? I know you understand this and this was just a little tiny mistake...” (August 14, 1949).

Mama's reports to the local newspaper were more carefully edited thereafter.

Shortly after Robin left, the beginning of the Foreign Service training class was postponed until July 7. But shortly before that date I got a large disappointment when Foreign Service called this morning and told me that the Senate has delayed approval of the list, and they can't appoint us until the list is approved. This is undoubtedly because the Senate has moved into a small and comparatively less comfortable meeting room for the rest of the session, to allow for repairs to the regular chamber. Well, I doubt if the place is much less comfortable than some of the hotboxes other people around here work in (with every hour off counted on annual leave — those old boys who are always yelling “fat bureaucracy” should try it once in a while, but the howls and groans and general distemper emanating from Capitol Hill at this point is something to listen to. I suppose the technicalities of moving (involving very little packing up, I gather) have delayed them, plus the holiday and now they are finally trying to start to do some of the work they should have been doing since January (July 6, 1949).

Meanwhile I continued at the Korea section in DRF, had several wisdom teeth pulled, and had an active social life. I was also trying to lay groundwork for my professional future:

The other day I went over to the area offices for a chat with a friend of mine who is chief of the division of southeast Asia affairs. I was asking him about posts and things, and was delighted when he mentioned in passing that (a) they would emphatically not consider sending me to this and that undesirable post, and (b) he thought this and that other post might be just the thing for me. Since he's the one who will do a large part of the deciding, I am only too happy to have him interested in our comfort, welfare and career possibilities. In effect, I think it means I can choose pretty much what I like in Southeast Asia. Am now working on making the acquaintance of his counterpart in the India office.... I am reading post reports and other information like mad at this point, so I can make an intelligent choice when the time comes [FSOs could indicate post preferences, which of course were not determinative of actual post assignments]. I don't want an uncomfortable post; on the other hand I want one where I can make a good niche for myself career-wise — where I won't be buried in a huge establishment or else buried in a tiny consulate where nothing ever happens. Also when I talked to him, he said I could spend my first assignment somewhere down there, and then if I liked and had made good I could come back here for a year's home assignment for further area study, either here or at one of the big universities, before further overseas duties. These assignments for further study et cetera, are of course limited and it takes a good deal of competence (and I suspect the usual talent for “operations”) to beat the game competition-wise.(June 30, 1949).

At last, on July 15, the training class convened. I can't give the training itself very high marks. The most useful parts were the technical lectures, on the laws and regulations governing passport and visa matters and consular dealings with shipping and seamen, were indeed useful preludes to practice, which is the only way really to learn how to do these things.

Many of the class had majors or advanced degrees in political science, history, or economics or a combination thereof; all had passed the fairly stiff Foreign Service written examinations in these subjects. The lectures on them at the Foreign Service Institute were elementary and boring. I called them “ladies' garden club speeches.” The instruction on diplomacy itself was vague and general. There are certain actions and forms and locutions that have special meaning in diplomacy, but we were not instructed in them. I had the feeling that most of the gentlemen who gave these lectures were rather at a loss as to what to say to us. One ended his stint with a plea to the women in the class to remember that they represented the Motherhood of America. Well, I could feel uniquely suited to doing so, as no the other women Foreign Service officers, in the class or on active duty, had ever married or had children. On the other hand, I was (and am) by no means sure that I was (or am) representative of American Motherhood. In any case, should my women colleagues (or I) marry, resignation was required.... Foreign Service is now retaining a deceased diplomat's wife who is supposed to be very hot on the protocol, et cetera, to instruct young lady FSO's and FSO wives in the winding ways of official etiquette and entertaining, and help us trail breakers solve some of the impasses caused by inevitable conflicts between the social code (where we are ladies), the professional code (where we are FSO's), and the official code (which will rub, as sometimes we will be being both at once in situations where it's always been one or the other. I personally breathed a deep sigh of relief when I learned that we are going to get some real assistance along this line. (to family, July 19, 1949)

My relief was premature. The lady, herself impeccable in southern-ladylike narrowness, simply couldn't deal with the preposterousness of such a “mixed-up bunch” of FSO's — only a few from Eastern or Southern establishment backgrounds, several not even Northern European gentiles, and four women! She made it clear that she knew she had a hopeless assignment. A couple of the wives were equally beyond her, not “our type” at all. Philip Habib's wife was a pretty blonde, elaborately coiffed and made up, dressed more for Hollywood or for cafe society than for a comfortably dowdy upper class. Clever as she was

it wouldn't take her long to learn how to adjust to new surroundings, and how, where she didn't want to adjust much, to make her surroundings like it, and her. But when she made her required call on Mrs. Alling to ask what specifically her husband's post (Ottawa) might require of her, and her best course of action, Mrs. Alling suggested that she “just hide.”

Much emphasis was laid on security, on keeping quiet, keeping safes locked, and so on. One never knew who might be a spy. Our lecturers did seem to know where the weakest link in our own chain was. It was Wives. Wives were responsible for a shocking proportion of the security breaches that took place. They seemed unable to keep their mouths shut, unable to distinguish sensitive items from anything else, just chattering on about everything, and so on and on.

I listened to three or four such lectures before I lost patience. When I did, I raised my hand and asked if Foreign Service wives were required to have instruction in maintaining security. Oh, no. We can't require them to do that. Nor was it an option. After all, remember that though it is discouraged, in fact quite a few Foreign Service wives are foreigners themselves, though they didn't seem to be any more prone to security breaches than their American sisters.

“Well,” said I, “I am so new to all this I really ought not to comment. But if husbands, who do have the training, can't keep quiet in conversation with their wives, how can we expect that the wives, without any security training, to know what to say and what not to?”

This “training” in security flowed naturally into several lectures by men from the military and the CIA on intelligence. Again, here were no descriptions of techniques, and appropriately so, for diplomats are emphatically not supposed to engage in covert intelligence (spying). We heard some good stories, including that of Richard Sorg and the real-life model for the later TV series “Murphy (Reilly?), King of Spies.” Though I should imagine there were some interesting American exploits to tell from recent OSS days, I don't recall hearing any of them.

The chap who regaled us with Sorg's story (which by the bye had been rather widely published already) rubbed me the wrong way. When by getting his places and dates all mixed up he presented the golden opportunity, I couldn't resist another needle. Again I raised my hand, and innocently said my, this Sorg must have been miraculous if he could carry off one of those coups at the age of seven and be in two places at the same time to boot. After class Bill Decker, of whom more later, roundly scolded me. I should be more respectful of these people.

After we got our post assignments such facilities as the Foreign Service Institute had for language instruction were put at our disposal. Outside the major European languages these facilities were minimal. I dutifully went through a phrase book and listened to the Institute's scratchy “Hindi” language records. It was discouraging later, when after a few days in India the washerman came in with a little boy to collect our laundry and I essayed a bit of instruction to him in this “Hindi” to have the boy say, “Dhobi no speak English memsahib.” My “Hindi” records and phrase book were in a high Urdu known only in Northern India. Since Bombay was home to three Indian languages — Hindi, Marathi and Gujarati — and English was a genuine lingua franca my not knowing it didn't hurt my work much, if at all. But in other cases and places I found the attitude that one didn't need to know the local language rather puzzling, and am glad that attitude seems to have changed since. In short,

I'm ... writing letters during a particularly boring and fruitless lecture. At this point I share the general lassitude and wrong-out feeling of the rest of the class. We're all so callused on the bottoms from sitting, and our ears are so callused with speeches, that on occasion we resemble a group of well-dressed zombies. I have a feeling that occasionally something must be said that is valuable, but I'm unable to absorb very much of it. (to family, August 30, 1949).

The most valuable part of the training-class experience took place during coffee breaks and lunch hours and evening and weekend get-togethers — the development of great

congeniality and esprit de corps among the trainees, a bright, ambitious and enthusiastic bunch who seemed at one and the same time to challenge and to support one another, the most pleasant such experience I have ever had. [Something of the same did also develop with the IRS training class in San Francisco in 1961. Possibly this is typical if people aren't in immediate and dog-eat-dog competition with each other.] The youngest among us was twenty-three; the oldest thirty. Three or four of the men were married, the rest of us single. It was by no means a group of scions of the Establishment. Most were of middle- and upper-middle class WASP origins, but a few may have had humble origins and there were several second-generation ethnics as well. One may have been Jewish; no blacks or Asians or Hispanics.

One of those who on paper would have seemed a real establishment type — Farmington, Connecticut; Yale; a “legacy”, (the Foreign Service equivalent of the Army brat) — turned out to be the only obvious eccentric and likely misfit among us. Jim Hewes was tubby, occasionally witty, but afflicted with what one of us described as “diarrhea of the vocal chords.” Was he simply unaware of the effect some of his sallies had on his listeners, or was he so eager for attention that he was willing to risk offending? Only his legacy status could explain how he had passed the oral examination. People were put off by him, but at the same time felt sorry for him. Poor Jim Hewes (as he came to be known there, and everywhere else I had contact with him later on) had problems.

About midway through the class we were all sent to New York for hands-on observation of how consular shipping and seamen's affairs and some other consular responsibilities were dealt with. The Institute put us all up in a third-rate downtown hotel (a better one than several I later experienced at the expense of the U.S. Government, which is chintzy about travel and per diem expenses). There I heard true Brooklynese for the first time. And there I found myself under suspicion of some sort of hanky-panky. Whoever made the room assignments must have thought “Corey” was male, for I was assigned a male roommate. And Lucille McHenry drew Cleo Noel. So the four of us made the appropriate trades, I rooming with Lucille, Cleo with my erstwhile partner. Word got out to Authority, and we

were called on the carpet. Which left Authority a bit red-faced when we showed up for the scolding.

We learned some fairly useful things on this not very taxing expedition, and had time to explore New York and generally enjoy ourselves.

For me, though, the high point came on the day we were divided into groups and sent to be taken through a freighter. The other three women were all assigned to a single group but I — was it name/sex confusion at work again? — was with another one. I sensed a bit of grumbling on the part of some of my group, because the word was that women were a distinct drawback on such expeditions. And indeed, when we got aboard the ship's officer in charge of us grumbled that the crew didn't exactly dress for mixed company and expressed other reservations about having a woman sashaying around. I promised to be broad-minded, and the engineer, who had drawn the job of showing us about, said he would bellow out warnings wherever we went. Which he did. I felt like a good case of measles.

Then it was up and down “ladders” from one deck to another, delving ever deeper into the bowels of the monster. I was being very subdued. I didn't want to spoil the others' experience more than necessary, and we did have to make a report.

Somewhere way way down the engineer opened a great “bulkhead” (door), turned to us and said, “Here's our engine room. I'm in charge here.” I took one look, gasped, gazed up in awed admiration at him, “Oh my goodness! Do you know how to work ALL THAT MACHINERY?”

That did it. A purring engineer introduced us (read: me) to what seemed like every nut, bolt, screw, pipe and whatnot in the place. This was his domain, he was king here. And I was a rare creature who appreciated it, and him.

One misogynist in our group later grumbled that the whole thing was sickening, absolutely sickening. But he didn't say so at the time, or object to our detailed inspection of the whole ship following exhaustion of the engine room's possibilities, or to the enormous, delicious, and unscheduled lunch hosted by the captain, prepared by a cook who came beaming into the officer's mess to accept our congratulations and share a recipe with me, and attended by the full complement of officers, whom I had observed furtively dashing off when flushed at various points on our tour, to show up for the meal shaved, immaculate and genial. No one complained when our report was commended as the most complete and perceptive ever made by a trainee group given that assignment.

When we got our post assignments one afternoon I quite without having planned it got up and invited the whole class, plus spouses and dates, to celebrate with B.Y.O.L.- spaghetti at my place later. When I got home, laden with spaghetti and makings for sauce and salad, I somewhat guiltily told Oma, our landlady, that I had invited some people for dinner. “How many?” “Oh, I think about thirty-six.” “Oh, my Gawd!!” Oma was delighted. Out came her biggest vat and in went mountains of spaghetti and sauce. Maybe all this brought glamour to Oma's life. We all had a wonderful time.

Something about Bill Decker was quite different from the others in the class. He seemed to have more money than the rest of us. He took, I thought, a superior and somewhat arrogant attitude toward the class and the Foreign Service itself — except when he scolded me for tripping up the CIA man. He once half-jokingly remarked to me hat he had always fantasied about wearing a black satin cloak and red cummerbund with a dagger hidden in it.

One day shortly before we all left for our posts he said he especially wanted to come by my house that evening, because he had a farewell present for me. I was packing but otherwise free, so told him to come ahead. Which he did, bearing the present, a little bottle of Chanel No. 5. Nice, but not terribly imaginative. When I had gushed sufficiently over it

I said, “Oh, I have a present for you, too.” “But Corey, you shouldn't have done that.” “Oh yes I should.”

Whereupon I fished out a little box in which lay the groom doll of an FAO Schwartz bridal pair, wrapped in a black satin cloak and wearing a red cummerbund with the hilt of a tiny gold paper dagger peeking out of it. I had spent several hours on this present.

Bill paled. “You are one of us!”

“I most assuredly am not.”

“Then who told you? I'm in deep cover!”

“You told me. You blew your own cover.”

I cited him chapter and verse as to the origins of my suspicions. But he could not believe I could have put these little bits together; there must be more to it. In the several years of our intermittent relationship thereafter Bill could never make up his mind whether I really had psychic powers, or whether I was CIA in even deeper cover than he was (a humiliating thought), or whether I knew someone in his “shop” and with dastardly feminine wiles had induced him to spill the beans on Bill.

No wonder our security people had worries. Were they any better, I wonder, at keeping secrets than Bill was, or than the former UC classmate who provided amusement for the gang one evening shortly after we all hit Washington? When another of the gang, who happened to be at the Pentagon job-hunting, bumped into X in a corridor, slapped him on the back with a “Well, fancy seeing you here! what's up?” X, instead of saying I'm looking for a job and a men's room in reverse order, gasped, “Forget you ever saw me here!”

My letters home that Fall are full of requests for Mama' help. Much of it also had a “last minute” character, because until I knew where we were going it was hard to specify which

clothes, which immunizations and so on, he would need. And one of these requests was addressed to the Boise Postman, who had a difficult relationship with Robin's dog “Boots:”

To the Boise Postman:If “Boots” barks & nipsSpoil your daily trips,

You have my heartfelt sympathy.But this especial letterIs one that Browns had betterGet, or many plans will go awry.So will you please, sir, have a heart And help us get a goodly start —Just telephone 624-RIf delivery is too much a chore!and let Browns know in ample timeThat they've a message (not in rhyme!)

(on envelope addressed to family,postmarked October 11, 1949)

When at last, three or four weeks before the class ended, our post assignments came through, my requests came thick and fast. There also followed a flurry of Washington shopping for a few household things, toiletries and so on, the said car, and clothes for me. Mid-Fall is not the best season for finding summer clothes, but I do not remember being short of them in the early stages in Bombay.

Until close to our departure I still didn't know when we would be leaving or whether we would be leaving from New York or from San Francisco. If it was San Francisco I would pick Robin up in Boise and we would go on from there; if New York, they planned to bring him to Washington, attend the commissioning ceremony at the end of the training class, and go to New York to see me off.

... the travel section ... are having an awful time getting people out [to India] due to its being the height of the tourist season on that route, and are telling us we'll have not more than a week's notice as to sailing or flying date.... Also, the formal commissioning will be October 14 instead of October 21. My orders read leave as soon as possible after October 21, but for the time being nothing can be arranged, certainly not by me. I am awfully sorry, but it looks like I'll just have to ask you to stand by on the whole thing, and it may be necessary to put R. on a plane with very short notice. I begin to see why we're told this is

like the Army! Well, who knows, we may get our lovely planned-for visit yet, but I would not come out here if I were you until we know what the score is. (to family, undated)

As it turned out, we left for Bombay two or three weeks after the commissioning ceremony. Mama and Daddy scheduled their visit earlier and we spent three or four days in Washington saying goodbyes.

The commissioning ceremony was fairly simple, but impressive nonetheless. Among the dignitaries present were the Under Secretary of State and George Kennan, then head of the Policy Planning Staff, whom I had always admired. He sat on the stage looking as if the cares of the world were on his shoulders, while an ambassador emeritus regaled us with some of the dangers Foreign Service Officers might face — why, he himself had heard bullets going off not far from his last embassy. We students, some of whom had seen a good deal of combat, were less than overwhelmed by the thought of such perils.

I have never figured out how it came about that I was chosen by my classmates to speak on their behalf at the commissioning ceremony. I shall always think of it as one of the real honors that have been bestowed on me. I thanked goodness that my speech was to be brief. Perhaps, for the record, I should quote it entire:

Mr. Secretary, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

This graduation marks the formal entrance of a new class of officers into the Foreign Service of the United States of America. What does this mean? Who are we, and what is the Foreign Service of the United States?

We, our class, are twenty-six men and women who have come along different roads. Every area in the United States is represented here: New England, the South, the Eastern Seaboard, the Rocky Mountains, the Southwest, the Middle West, Hawaii. We have been New York cliff-dwellers and plain dirt farm dwellers. [Staring at Romaine Alling in the audience:] Our forbears came from many countries. We have gone to school at small

colleges and great universities. On a given issue we find twenty-six shades of opinion — clearly defined!

[Still staring] All these differences — aren't they characteristic of America? Yet perhaps even more characteristic is our real community of interests, our real unity of background and ideals.

All of us are proud of being citizens of a country whose history is one of enduring effort to achieve its ideals of freedom and justice. And all of us know that freedom and justice are not to be passively accepted by us or by any American as rights without corresponding responsibilities. Our Constitution, our Bill of Rights, our form of government, must be put actively into practice by the citizens of the United States, if they are not to become a so-called “phase of history.”

We also share a fundamental belief in the success of the American economic system. Our economy is the vehicle through which American prosperity has developed. It also permits the citizen to pursue his own interest and at the same time carry out his responsibility in the society as a whole.

So in our diversity we are all Americans. And we are Foreign Service Officers. What is the Foreign Service? Everyone here knows what the law and the regulations say, and we've heard the fables about it, too. Some of you know from experience, but that is more than we neophytes can say. We can't look back, but we can and do look ahead.

We see the Foreign Service as that part of the government whose members represent and transact the public business abroad of the American people — all the people. In another sense the Foreign Service is an organization whose success depends upon the maintenance of esprit de corps. This doesn't mean losing sight of the individual — it is an American Foreign Service. It does mean that the individual Foreign Service Officer is not playing solo, or playing to the grandstand. He is a member of a team.

We want to thank everyone who has taken part in our training program. Our speakers have been busy people. Their day-to-day work is important and time consuming. Yet they have been kind enough to explain that work to us. They have answered our questions, and have instructed us in our own work. More than that, many of them have offered to spend more time with those of us whose interests may be in their fields. We will not forget their efforts.

Our most especial thanks go to Mr. Hale and the other members of the Foreign Service Institute staff. They have gone beyond the principle of instruction by precept, and by their example they have shown us what the Foreign Service can mean.There is a fine tradition behind us. Our seniors in the Service have set a high standard for us. We shall do our best to maintain that standard. Thank you.

And so each of us twenty-six was commissioned a Foreign Service Officer, Vice Consul of Career, and Secretary in the Diplomatic Corps of the United States of America.

We had been told that as soon as we got our post assignments we should write the ambassador, or the officer in charge if ours was a consular post, tell him of our pleasure at being assigned there, and ask if we might bring with us anything he or his family might need timely. My future Consul General, Clare Timberlake, referred me to his mother-in-law, who lived in Washington. This lady most graciously entertained Robin and me at her house one evening, giving us dinner, and to take along on the plane an electric iron, a sixteen pound smoked turkey for the Timberlakes' Thanksgiving, and what seemed to me to be a complete wardrobe for her daughter.

Fortunately the Department gave us generous luggage allowances. Unfortunately, the turkey wouldn't fit into any of our regular luggage, not even my wardrobe trunk. It had to go in its own specially packed carton. When I took the stuff to the train station for the trip to New York the baggage director jibbed at the idea of classifying a smoked turkey as luggage. I somehow talked him into taking it anyway, and when the same question came

up at the airport was careful to refer to that box as filled with “dressed goods” — very easy on the articulation of the second “d.” And once in Bombay, I was embarrassed at Julie Timberlake's embarrassment when I arrived at her house in a consulate car half-filled with the “few things” her mother had given me to bring to her.

Thus, tired but happy on a beautiful Sunday morning in November 1949, Robin and I flew out of La Guardia into adventure.

BOMBAY

Air travel in 1949 was different from air travel now. First, it was slower. We left New York on a Sunday morning; we arrived in Bombay near midnight the following Wednesday. Second, such amenities as luxurious hotel accommodations at airports were unknown. But so was the “herd of cattle” effect. Seats were fairly roomy and service was excellent and plentiful.

At Shannon, where we landed late the first evening after a cold delay for engine repairs in Gander, we were shown into a fairly primitive sleeping room where we spent the night. Robin was impressed neither with the sanitary facilities — he had not previously encountered chamber pots or washstands holding a basin and a pitcher of cold water — nor with the tasteless oat porridge, beautifully served, that we got for breakfast.

Robin was a superb traveler. He amused himself with his books and crayons when we weren't rubber-necking at the seat window. Only once did I have to admonish him not to run up and down the aisle of the plane and disturb the other passengers. When I consider some later purgatorial trips I have made, with children screaming, steadfastly kicking the back of one's seat, spilling food and drink all over one — and grownups apparently trying to outdo the young in barbaric behavior (a favorite trick is to slam a heavy bag over the fragile hat one has trustingly placed in the bin above one's seat), I conclude Robin was even at six years old a thorough gentleman.

We got into Bombay about seven hours late, having lost some time in getting out of Shannon, Ireland. Our trip was largely uneventfu— just one airport after another, all looking pretty much the same. We did get a glimpse at the pyramids, from quite a distance, and had a splendid time looking at Arabia from three miles up! At Dhahran, Arabia, Robin began to suffer a bit from fatigue and had a tummy ache. It was nothing serious, but at the moment of course it created quite a fuss. To complicate matters I was having trouble getting a cable through to Bombay with hour of arrival, et cetera. The Army was being coy that day, as usual. Like a typical American I started screaming for the consul. He arrived, just in time to witness Robin in his biggest up-chuck, and took off assuring me he would wire immediately through the diplomatic lines. The upchuck resulted in Robin's complete recovery, and all was smooth thereafter. But when we clambered off the plane in Bombay, both in fine shape, we were met by two exceedingly worried young bachelors from the Consulate, who had apparently been informed he was on point of death or something, had a doctor all alerted, etc. It was only temporary, though, and probably due to too many snacks and sweets which I couldn't entirely prevent the rest of the passengers from showering on Robin.

We're temporarily lodged in a boarding house run by an Englishwoman. It is ... much like all boarding houses, and I shall try to get an apartment or bungalow as soon as possible.... it's wonderful to have tea and fruit brought first thing in the morning, laundry called for every day (price for all our stuff dirtied on the trip 12 annas — about $.15), and service all over the place. There's no hot water, but we will arrange to have bath water heated, and so forth on the details we Americans tend to miss.... Last night driving in from the airport we got a good look at hundreds of white-garbed figures peacefully walking — or even sleeping! — in the road, utterly impervious to the dangers of moving vehicles.

This morning we both went down to the office and met everyone, talked over my work for the next few months and so forth. Robin was fascinated by the ships' loading and unloading, which can be seen from the windows of the office. He had the whole

Commercial section explaining all details to him! Then we came home and rested a bit, then went to the apartment of one of the other vice consuls for lunch.... Tomorrow we are invited to Timberlakes' (the consul general and wife), where Robin will play baseball with their boys and I will deliver [the “few things” Julie's mother commissioned me to transport]. Robin is invited to the circus next week.... Incidentally [he] is going to be as much a shark on his rupees as he ever was on his dollars! He has it figured out to the pie (about 1/8 cent).... Do write soon, and as often as the airmail rate [25c] will permit....(November 19, 1949; n.b.: unless otherwise noted, all excerpts from letters are from my letters home)

In truth the boarding house was dark and dirty and rather grim. The food exemplified what can be achieved by combining raw materials of indifferent quality with the lower-middle-class English penchant for cooking everything to death, this augmented by the training by the l-m-c-E memsahibs of Goan cooks, who themselves inherit two of the poorest culinary traditions I have encountered, the southwest Indian and the Portuguese. Despite the absence of any raw food in the menus, I suspect that it was there that the dysentery amoeba got to me.

Only “European” (which included American) guests were accepted. There were several such segregated facilities in Bombay, including the second-best swimming and sports club. Notwithstanding Indian independence there were as far as I know no anti-discrimination laws affecting public places. This may have suited most Indians quite well. Who on earth would want to live and eat in that boarding house and pay its fees, which by Indian standards were very high? Besides, as I would learn, though they differed among themselves as to criteria of cleanliness and pollution, most Indians regarded “Europeans” and their habits, and Indians of lower castes or different religious persuasions, as dirty.

Robin and I had one room, sharing a bath with several other boarders. The furnishings were shabby, and we were crowded:

... in a room about twelve by eighteen feet, we have: two beds, two “Elmiras” (big old-fashioned wardrobes), two wardrobe trunks, all our luggage, one dressing table, one tea table, one small table, two straight chairs, one dressing table bench, one sofa, one big chair, one desk, one six-foot Christmas tree, gobs of books and toys, and the two of us. (December 29, 1949)

No lamps, just a light in a ceiling fixture. Robin didn't complain about the light's being on when he went to bed and I was there reading, but if I had gone out of an evening my coming in would awaken him.

One morning I discovered some of my writing paper in tiny bits and chunks floating loose in the desk drawer. I could only imagine that Robin had done this and that it reflected some serious emotional or psychological problem. What had this move done to my precious child? I consciously and unconsciously worried about this all day. That evening, after he was asleep and I was trying to read, I heard a rustle behind the desk. Shortly a huge rat showed itself, crept over to the fruit bowl, took a few nibbles from various pieces, then scurried back behind. Then I heard noises of paper being chewed up in the drawer. Now my fears of Robin's being emotionally disturbed were replaced by worse ones. He could be bitten, and get rabies.

Though the boarding house was a temporary makeshift pending our getting an apartment, I had been resigned to waiting for some time, as housing, especially housing suitable for “Europeans,” was in short supply in Bombay and all new rentals must be approved by the relevant government agencies, whose leisureliness in India was and I think remains legendary. But After Rat I was resigned no more. Next morning I marched into the office of Joe Belehrad, the staff officer in charge of “housekeeping” for the consulate and its American personnel, with an impassioned plea to him to do everything he could to get us out of that boarding house. I said I knew if anyone could get us an apartment, he could, and begged him to try his best.

Joe was one of the bachelors who had met Robin and me at the airport. During the drive into town he had turned to me and said, “I understand you want to do shipping.” I had answered that I had no idea of what I would be assigned to and anything would be fine with me, including shipping. To which he replied “Well, I'm the shipping officer here.” So he was in charge of shipping and seamen, besides doing the consulate's “housekeeping” chores: housing, getting our stuff through customs, local procurement, managing the custodial staff, and so on. I must have convinced him that I wasn't after that job of his, because we soon were on friendly terms, and he was especially nice to Robin, to whom he became “Uncle Joe.” Joe's bearer's wife had become Robin's ayah (nanny) almost upon our arrival. And well before the rat episode I had also learned that “Tim” Timberlake, our consul general, thought the world of Joe. Tim believed Joe accomplished wonders surmounting all sorts of local difficulties. So I had confidence in Joe.

Which was not misplaced. By shortly after New Year's we had an apartment, by coincidence the one immediately below Joe's own. A dingy one-bedroom affair, it wasn't ideal, but it could be cleaned up and spruced up and would do for the time being.

The Bombay consulate was then situated right next to the dock area, in an oldish three-story building with a parking lot and a large outdoor tap at which the chauffeurs would wash the cars and several score male locals would bathe each day. Though not large as such establishments went in some other countries, including its USIS facilities it employed some fifty or sixty people: six FSOs ranging from Claire (”Tim”) Timberlake, the Consul General, down to me; a staff officer — Joe Belehrad; Dorothy Sparks, our code clerk; three American women secretaries, five or six Eurasian women secretaries, five or six male Indian clerks, two or three Pathan chauffeurs, three or four hamals and sweepers as cleaning crew, and a couple of messengers. Once a week or so a diplomatic courier would arrive with bags of documents and other items sent through the diplomatic post. The USIS office had a Foreign Service Staff (FSS) officer, an American woman clerk, and a number of local employees.

Many of these people will appear later in this story. Of those who do not, I should mention Winnie Burrowes, the senior American secretary, an efficient good-looking, good-tempered person who shocked me when I renewed her passport and discovered she was thirty-five (she didn't look so terribly old, I thought...); two other American secretaries, Martha Darke and smiling chubby Betsy Bradfield, who a few months later embarked on a holiday flight to Kashmir and was killed when it crashed; her replacement, Jamie O'Neill, married Lester McNelly, a courier, who hailed from of all places Boise; Bob Dreessen, a FSO formerly posted to Tihwa who when the Communists took China and began arresting American consuls had made the trek out through Tibet with several others in a jeep that became brakeless for the last part of the trip. Bombay was too urban and Western and civilized for Bob, who in short order went off to Kabul. Harry Spielman, our agricultural reporting officer, was a thirty-ish bachelor whose charming sister JoAnne acted as his hostess. Paul Geren, the commercial affairs officer, and his wife were nice people, very high-minded. Howard Imbrey (amusing, mischievous, a bit vicious in fact, not high-minded) called the Gerens “crypto-missionaries.” Gerens did not serve alcoholic drinks at their parties so were not close to most of the American business community in Bombay, who were a hard-drinking lot.

...His nanny ... is sweet as can be with him, and looks no end picturesque in her white saris draped Muslim-style, her little turquoise nose ornament and her armload of gold bracelets. But servants here do let the children just walk all over them, especially the nannies, and I think Robin is too old for that sort of thing. So as soon as I get straightened around with an apartment I think I'll keep a bearer (manservant) who will take him to and from school, and look after him while I'm not around, in addition to his other duties.... I am still not completely used to the idea of having three or four people around to attend to my slightest wish round the clock!

Next week Walter Lippmann and his wife are coming through here, and I've been invited to dinner for them at the CG's house. Have already worn evening dress three times!..... last

night [Robin] and I had a dinner date, so we started off in a gharry — a real old fashioned horse-and-buggy deal. Well, the driver couldn't speak English and my Hindi wasn't up to telling him directions in a city whose street names I don't even know, and we had quite a gay time, but arrived only an hour late.... One nice thing about it, if you do get lost, there are always about three hundred people around ready and willing to try to help! People seem to live in the streets here — many of them do — and one never worries about fresh air because most places don't even have windows, but are in essence just a floor (always of polished stone), a high-ceilinged roof, and a few pillars with grillwork in between! There are some rather handsome apartment houses, from which I suspect our American architects got a lot of good ideas when they were building some of our modern buildings .... they look “modern,” but are obviously older. (Thanksgiving 1949)

Weekends were full of visits to the beach, to one of the swimming clubs, and occasional sailing.

“Last Saturday afternoon our shipping officer took us out on a ship which was loading cargo.... You can imagine how thrilled [Robin] was, and how he went all over the ship with “Uncle Joe” (the shipping officer) and the Captain and a fine toothed comb! [description of more outings] You see he leads a fairly interesting life — but he still occasionally gets lonesome for his Grammy and Granddad. (December 23, 1949).

We acquired Goan Antonio, who initially did our cooking and the housework except laundry, floors and bathrooms, but who eventually graduated to cook and, after I convinced him we didn't want to eat like English people — “just cook everything for us; we'll tell you if we like it or not” — became a fine one.

Incidentally, would you like to get me a few things? I need

6 grip-tooth side combs (the 25# ones)

12 black human-hair nets, cap size

2 bathing capsa couple of cotton dresses; not too dressy but good-looking enough for office and out-to-lunch and all that.

a bathing suit, size 30. I like the knit wool or latex best

We don't wear stockings here. I can get lovely sandals, saris, evenings wraps, gobs of jewelry..... at 8 below, the Mode [Boise's women's specialty shop] will probably think you're insane when you order such things, but that's what we are wearing. If you can find good-looking and not-too-expensive washable evening dresses, they would be ok too....four evening dresses isn't really enough. (Ibid.).

This was only the first of a long series of requests for supplies and accountings for their payment. It's a good thing Mama loved to shop.

(After lunch): Robin and I just had lunch aboard the “President Monroe” [a cruise ship] which docked here this morning. It was like stepping from Bombay into a first-class American hotel!

The job is going very well; in fact I have a little spare time these days and may work in some other things I've been wanting a try at.(Ibid.)

“The job” for me was the job most new FSO's got: issuing or refusing visas, keeping the waiting lists for immigration visas, renewing passports and looking after other noncommercial problems that Americans other than seamen might encounter in the consular district, witnessing marriages involving Americans and recording their births and deaths within the consular district, a few odd jobs such as keeping records of the incidence of certain diseases in the district for the U.S. Health Service. Americans in the district were also encouraged to register with the consulate, so that they could be contacted and if possible helped in case of emergency. All this of course under the supervision of the consul general. Fortunately for me I wasn't stuck in a huge consular factory where I would

have been limited to routine work in a single area, but had the whole range of visa and passport matters to deal with and gain experience in.

I also had a great advantage in my two clerks. In the United States exquisitely beautiful Olivia d'Souza and exceedingly bright, pleasantly assertive Joan Fisher would, in any office not completely imbued with sexual prejudice, have long since been graduated to administrative or even executive positions, and their Eurasian origins would not have been the painful social limitation it was in India.

The passport side involved me with the fifteen hundred or so Americans, including dependents, in the consular district. They were about evenly divided between missionaries and business people — two highly contrasting lots. The consular section renewed passports and sometimes issued new ones to children born in India to Americans, or dependents who had been included on the head of household's passport but now must travel abroad without him. Most of this side of the work was fairly routine, although it could be complicated by divorce and remarriage, birth and long early residence outside the United States, and so on.

One day an ancient lady in a traditional Catholic nun's habit appeared in my office. She said she had been born in France of American parents, had in fact been christened by the American Ambassador, but after her girlhood and education in France and England she had joined a missionary order, been sent to India, and been there ever since. Now in her eighties and failing a bit, she was instructed by the Superior of her order to lay down her missionary burden and go “home” to the mother house, now in the United States. Though America would be strange to her, the dear lady willingly hearkened to her vow of obedience, and duly came to the consulate to get a passport so she could fulfil that vow. She had never had a passport of any kind; when she traveled to India they were not required of Americans going there.

Well, it took several cables between Bombay, Washington, and Paris, and I have visions of a hapless French clerk sifting long through dusty files in some Gallic basement, but her citizenship claim was proved, and this courageous old soul, airborne for the first time in her life, was transported to pasture on the other side of the earth.

The Bombay consular district, one of four in India, included Western India south of the Indus and north of Kerala. Its then eighty-odd million inhabitants gave it third rank among the four in population. Our consulate alone had a waiting list for non-student immigration visas of over four thousand (half of them seemingly named Patel or Patil, a Hindu subcaste designation). What then must have been the total Indian waiting list? The annual American quota for all Indians of non-European origin was one hundred. Issuance of a non-student immigration visa to anyone but relatives of Indians already U.S. residents was a rare thing. Imagine my disgust when a plump Indian lady came to my office for some bit of business, and it turned out she and her four children had gotten five of these precious immigration visas the year before. But “Life is too hard in America,” so back she came, to live where she and her brood would be waited on by servants and she would not be faced with the tasks of an American housewife.

Given this formidable and for practical purposes hopeless situation of dealing with regiments of visa applicants for the handful of visas available, and given the general perception that the job was really just a sort of necessary scutwork one must do before going on to greater things, my predecessors' having permitted the visa files to become an incredible mess is easily explicable. But it did impede our work, for whenever an inquiry about an applicant's status came in, and they came in constantly, someone had to delve long and deep to find the file. Joan and Olivia and I worked hard to get those files in good order for once. And once in good order we spent about a third the time on immigration visa matters that we had had to spend before. Then we got to work organizing our other jobs and files.

Immigration visas were impressive affairs. Besides the stamp in the passport the visa holder got an elaborate document tied in red ribbon tape (literally!) fixed with warm wax in which the impression of the great seal of the United States was then impressed, and bearing the signature of the issuing consul in no fewer than eight places. Handwriting and signatures have never been my strong point, and once I once managed, at about signature number seven and having some question for Joan about the seal, to sign “Corey B. Seal.” Poor Joan had to spend half an hour doing the whole thing all over again. One day when Robin visited the office, he contemplated Olivia busily typing — her desk was in my office room — and asked, “Mummy, how come you get to be consul and Miss d'Souza does all the work?”

Indian nationals of European, or predominantly European, ancestry could immigrate under the quota assigned for the country of their forbears' origin. I remember a gentleman who spent many hours trying to convince me that whatever his appearance (he was a handsome man most of whose genes were obviously of the subcontinent, with a few from East Asia and possibly Africa and Europe as well), his ancestry was pure Dutch from Ceylon. I wish I could have been convinced. Unfortunately the elaborate genealogical evidence he presented on a beautifully inscribed document couldn't be substantiated.

Then there were those who wanted to go to America as students. They must of course have been admitted to a school, but that was no insurmountable problem. More commonly the question of their support in the United States was the stumbling block. The regulations did permit foreign students to take substantial part-time work. Thus when an applicant could not show an adequate source of dollar support in being, or an affidavit of support from an acceptable American source, discussion of this work option would ensue. When I asked one young man, a junior employee of a local Mahrathi-language newspaper and probably of a Vaisya (merchant and artisan) caste, if he was prepared to wait on tables, wash dishes, sweep floors — these being the commonest kinds of student labor in American colleges and universities — he drew himself up: “Madam, I am journalist!” I

could not issue him a student visa on the supposition that his journalism would support him in the United States.

Yet I didn't know my own country all that well, either. I remember assuring people that in the United States everyone worked, even rich people who didn't have to. I was mostly right, but hadn't really tumbled to the reality of a tiny American leisure class, especially of unmarried women living at home but also some men, who did not feel it incumbent on themselves either to work for money or pursue a concentrated intellectual or charitable or public-interest concern.

One case led me into insubordination. This was in mid- or late 1950, toward the end of my visa-issuing career and shortly before China, to official Washington's surprise, entered the Korean War. China having “gone Communist” and India having recognized the new regime — as the United States would not for more than two decades — new personnel had replaced all the former Chinese diplomats and consuls there. One day Tim Timberlake called me into his office and told me in a conspiratorial tone that the new Chinese consul had contacted him. He told Tim he was not in sympathy with the Communists and wanted refugee visas for himself and his family. Tim had said he thought this might be arranged if the consul would quietly turnover his consular seals to Tim. (The seals might be useful, in the current derring-do atmosphere of world politics). What a coup! Our CIA man, who masqueraded none too successfully as a regular FSO, was in on the deal. I think I was suppose to be excited and a bit flattered to be allowed in on it, too.

This went back and forth a bit. I don't remember if Washington was brought in on it. I met the gentleman and for no reason I could put my finger on I neither liked nor trusted him. One morning some time later Tim called me in again, said the consul would come to my office, I should issue him and his family visas, and the consul would then turn the seals over to him, Tim.

“No, Tim. If you or Howard (the CIA man) want to do it that way, you issue the visas. I will issue them if the consul give gives you the seals first. Then you can call me into your office and I'll do the documents and take them back up to my office and have them made up. I am low man on the totem pole here. I am not going to issue visas complete with impressions of our seals to a Chinese Communist official and his family, have him not give you his seals but make fakes of ours from the impressions and then send the lot on to Peking. My neck isn't strong enough to put it in that noose. Yours is a lot stronger.”

Tim was annoyed but perhaps saw the logic of my position, for he said he would contact the consul and tell him about the new arrangements. I do not know what happened then. I never again heard from the Chinese consul and never heard another word from Tim or Howard on the subject. The consul remained at his post.

Non-immigration visas could sometimes be interesting, too. I visited another gentle ancient lady, this one Indian, at her sickbed to get the information needed for a visa for her to go to the United States for medical treatment. Reading down the questionnaire she stopped at one point, looked up at me and quavered, “Oh, then I cannot go, because I have been a convicted prisoner. I was sentenced and jailed in a satyagraha [Gandhian non-cooperation demonstration for Indian independence].” I was able to tell her that that kind of jail sentence didn't count.

One of the two occasions in my life on which I bent the law rather hard had to do with a case involving both a citizenship decision and an off-quota immigrant visa. The law had it that illegitimate children born abroad of American fathers and foreign mothers were American citizens if, and only if, the father acknowledged the child. The war had left fewer of these cases in India than in some other parts, because fewer American servicemen were stationed there. But it had left enough. One Eurasian girl had had such a baby, whose father had gone back to the United States, married, and forgotten that little souvenir of his Indian service. In this case it happened, however, that a buddy of this soldier had been secretly in love with the girl. He returned to India, married the girl, and came into my

office to apply for off-quota visas for her and the child. When he told me all this I could see it wasn't going to work. Even if he formally adopted the child, he was not the biological father and while his wife could get a visa the child could not. So after he had said his piece (fortunately we were alone in the office) I simply said to him, What I understand you have told me is that you are acknowledging this child as yours. Sign here. He was sharp enough to see my meaning and say no more, but signed. Later, when the baby was being added to his passport and his wife's elaborate immigration visa was being prepared, Joan (the Eurasian girls were inveterate gossips) remarked, “But Mrs. Sanderson, that isn't his baby!” “Oh, really? He seems to think it is.” End of story.

In addition to the Christmas things with Robin, some of the more interesting “social” things I've been in on latterly ... a big Parsi wedding tonight, a reception for the Papal Legate for Australia, a trip to an old Hindu temple on Elephanta island, and a small gathering with Errol Flynn among those present. Also numerous small parties and lots of interesting people. (Ibid.)

Flynn was part of the company making the film “Kim” on location in northern India. Why he came to Bombay I don't remember; no filming was being done there nor did others of the cast appear. Why couldn't Paul Lukas, known as a gentleman, choose to visit us instead of Flynn? Flynn's reputation preceded him — not only because of the scandals widely aired in American courts, but because he showed himself a thorough loose cannon in Delhi, insulting several prominent ladies and thereby precipitating a couple of diplomatic near-incidents. Before his arrival the MGM man in Bombay, Lee Kamern, some of the consular people — including me because I handled American citizens' brushes with Indian law and police, and some others from the local American community held a council of war. We decided on policy: find Flynn plenty of pretty girls of a certain profession and some modicum of English and manners, otherwise don't leave him alone for a moment.

Flynn stayed with the Kamerns, who gave a small dinner party for him on the evening of his arrival. The guests, including me, sat at cocktails in the living room for at least two

hours after our arrival at the appointed time and before Flynn and Margo Kamern emerged from elsewhere in the house. He was beautiful, ranking with Shannon Caples, Hilbert Higgins, Oliver Rampersad and Adrian Melissinos as the handsomest men I have ever met.

After introductions, with titles, he at once plunked himself down beside me and began the usual teasing remarks about the work of lady vice consuls (”You're good at vice, I hope.” “Sorry, no. I just try to give good advice when asked.”) Then he took a slightly different tack. What did I think of the brilliant red socks he sported along with his beautifully tailored and otherwise conventional dinner clothes? I hadn't noticed them, I lied, but — very colorful, I allowed. “My word, maybe I should open my fly. You might work up some excitement about that.” “Mr. Flynn, that would no doubt draw notice — but excitement?” From then on he behaved like a lamb around me, though not, unfortunately, at all times and places during his Bombay sojourn. Nonetheless our war council could congratulate itself that no major crises arose.

You asked about life in India and the people; there is so much and so much of it can't really be explained in words. [I suggest they get a small projector and I send them slides of pictures I take] ... you can [then] get a very good idea of everything except the dirt and the smells... which we're quite used to by now. European dress is common among the men but very rare among the ladies. The sari drape we see in the States is pretty much confined to Parsis, Muslims and upper class Hindu women; the lower classes wear very ragged clothing, and they catch the back of the sari skirt between the legs and fasten it at the front at the waist, making a sort of “pants.” Bare feet are universal in houses (which is really much cleaner), and very common outdoors. Men often wear a European shirt, tail out, and a “dhoti” or long piece of white cloth draped into a sort of flowing trouser-toga effect. Coolies and beggars often wear only the loin cloth. There are some extremely handsome people among all the groups; among the men I think the Sikhs are probably most impressive; they are very tall and majestic, with their elaborate turbans and beautifully coiffed beards. Children of the upper classes wear European

dress, children of the lower classes wear very little if anything, occasionally a sari on a little girl, though..... There is magnificent Indian dancing here and I find Indian music intriguing although very strange — quarter tones and all that. Robin has acquired the comfortable oriental habit of squatting on his haunches — says it keeps the seat of his pants clean! To an American the absolute poverty of a large part of the population is appalling; one has to get accustomed to it and it isn't especially easy. (Ibid.)

I never did get really used to the poverty. But unless they hid their discomfort very well, many of the other Americans there all too easily took on the attitudes which also characterized so many Indians of the comfortable classes. This extended into modes and tones of speech. Ordinary communication with the lower classes seemed to a foreign ear at least to be conducted in a sharp and scolding tone. So also with the way servants and menials were treated generally. For example, I once made a day trip upcountry with Ashok Mehta, a socialist leader of national standing from whose lips scarcely a sentence escaped that did not deplore and condemn the poverty and misery and indignities heaped on India's masses, laying the blame mostly on the foreign imperialists but significantly also on India's own privileged. We stopped for a picnic lunch on a broiling plain where however there was one large tree just off the road. Mehta, I, our picnic and our car rested under that tree. Though there was ample room in its shade for them, our driver and the flunkies who had come along in a second vehicle, an open small truck, all sat at a respectful distance from us, under the full sun. And Mehta spoke to them as crossly (to my ears) as anyone else would have. So did Maniben Kara, a local Socialist labor leader whom I got to know rather well, speak to her servants.

Americans and Europeans tended also to exhibit general disdain for India and Indians: “If there's a wrong way to do it, that's the way they'll do it.”

I have wondered to what extent this callousness is a defense mechanism. Perhaps, in face of such misery and knowing that one can't do much about it, one develops hard-heartedness as a sort of anaesthetic. Yet I found other versions of it in American attitudes

in Greece, and later in Italy and Japan — a mixture of annoyance and contempt. Is this just a natural human reaction to different ways? Perhaps so, because at bottom most Indians thought Americans coarse and immoral — but so rich! and Greeks and Italians and Japanese have their own tit-for-tat reactions.

For my own part I am sure I made my own lower-ranking servants (the hamal, the dhobi, the sweeper), and others of similar status, uncomfortable when I insisted they stand up before me instead of crouching, turn around and walk out of the room rather than backing out.

Just got a letter from you under date of October 27, inviting me to Charlotte for the weekend! Please, incidentally, do send only airmail — the other takes from six weeks to two months. I'd rather hear less often and get the news while it's new.... I've been laid up the last few days with an attack of dysentery, but it's gone now, and a couple of days in bed were really quite pleasant....I was silly enough to go out and eat in an unknown restaurant one night a couple of weeks ago.... You should have heard the doctor giving me heck! We use only boiled water for cooking, drinking, making milk, etc. Milk is made from Klim — powdered — and is really quite good. Believe it or not, I have tea first thing in the morning, and tea for breakfas— a defection on the part of one of the champion supporters of the coffee industry... (January 7, 1950)

To this day it is tea — good strong cheap black Indian tea, with a bit of milk — that gets me going in the morning. The Klim was not as pleasant as my letters pretend: not instant-mix, it was lumpy and tasted much like diluted evaporated milk. We a substitute in buffalo milk from a dairy, certified beyond belief. This buffalo milk was rich and delicious, one only had to get used to its pale gray tint.

Besides heck and some pills to relieve and control the dysentery, the doctor, the charming one of two Austrians who did most of the doctoring for local Americans, looked sympathetically into my eyes and said Madam, you are not happy in this terrible country;

try to bear with it and try to get out of it. Did one get dysentery because one was unhappy? This puzzled me a bit. In fact I was happy as a clam.

I went to the races with the Spanish consul last week — my first experience with the races and lots of fun. Didn't lose much money, but was livid when an old nag which I'd put five rupees to place on, just because I thought it had such an icky name, won 20 to 1. I got thirteen rupees and could have gotten two hundred! The races are really quite something — “tout le monde” goes out there to see and be seen... and wears its most gorgeous saris and jewels and Paris frocks and so on.... It is heavenly to have a nanny [and other servants]. You should have had some such opportunity and you both had to work so hard.... we were talking about you and imagining what you would be doing — it would be about 7:30 PM there. Robin said he guessed Granddad would be working in the garden. That seemed reasonable enough until we suddenly remembered it is the middle of winter in Boise, and you were probably just about to put a log in the fireplace! (January 7, 1950).

The nanny and her husband, Joe Belehrad's bearer, lived with their son, Pullaj, in one of the servants' rooms in the small low building that was a part of many apartment compounds. They had apparently decided to take their chances on having only one child, and educating him, for Pullaj was studying English and other subjects not typical for children of the servant class. He was also a congenial little playmate for Robin. One day I overheard them planning some mischief. Pullaj whispered, “But won't your Mummy punish you?” Robin: “Oh, no. I can do anything I want. I'm never punished.” After Pullaj left Mummy told Robin that he was mistaken, that in this case he would be punished in advance, and that the punishment would be that he was “campused” for the rest of that day and the next. He was not to go out and play, nor were his pals to come inside with him. At dusk I saw Robin leaning over the verandah disconsolately telling Pullaj below, “No, I can't come out, and you can't come in. I'm campused.”

He spends lots of time flying kites nowadays. His big American ones are gone — one was eaten up by a rat in the other place (we don't have them here, I think) and the other

split in the wind, but he has purchased some small Indian kites and gets a big kick out of them. He has, besides the consulate kids, two little English boy friends and several of his schoolmates, Indians and others, who live around here.... He visits almost all the big American ships coming into Bombay — being a special pal of our shipping officer (Ibid.)

The little English boys were the sons of Sir Richard Temple, Bart., and his wife Mari. Sir Richard, a descendant of the early nineteenth-century India scholar and statesman of that name, was a delightful chap, himself a scholar, then in his seventies. He had been born and spent most of his life in India. It was his home. He had been long widowed when he married Mari, a beautiful young woman then at most twenty-five who some implied was Eurasian. This was to have been a brilliant marriage for Mari, offering social position, all material comforts, and even the possibility of escaping “this dreadful place [India].” Alas! a head for business was not among Sir Richard's assets. Some bad investments and possibly dishonest partners suddenly rendered him nearly penniless when John, the younger boy, was newly born. Mari's description of the Dickensian scene in which the creditors' men came to collect “everything, even John's layette and bassinet” was so heartrending as to reduce poor Mama to tears when she heard it. When we knew them they lived near us in a cavernous old apartment housekept by Mari's dark gentle mother. “Granny” was beloved by all including their servants, who were reputed to supplement Temples' own pathetic market allowance from their own tiny wages. For Mari, only the social position remained. That and the hope against hope that ten-year-old Peter would inherit the title, which included an income that was now somehow out of Sir Richard's reach. Unfortunately there was another son, now well into his thirties, from Sir Richard's first marriage, who lived somewhere in the West Indies. He, not Peter, was the heir. Mari's unspoken hopes that this son would somehow disappear before he had a son were reflected in her insistence on Peter's being groomed for the title. Peter had everything in Temples' power to give him; John, Robin's age, the barest leftovers. Therefore it was no surprise that Peter was something of a pill, whereas little John was a charming child. John

and Robin became best friends, and I believe corresponded for several years after we left India.

Last night I was at a farewell dinner party for one of the higher Indian officials around here. You would have gotten quite a kick out of it. Most of Asia and some of Europe was there (at least as far as the consular corps was concerned), complete to the Saudi Arabian burnoose, et cetera. One gets very used to this sort of thing... it is we who dress oddly! Well... it came up in the conversation that you had engineered the Zion Mt. Carmel highway. It turned out that several of the other guests had been down there, and they were no end impressed....

Hindi is a required subject at [Robin's] school and he practically knows the Hindi alphabet already! — talks with the servants in the strangest pidgin English I ever heard. What he does is talk English with them with their accent, vocabulary and construction. Sometimes he forgets and talks like that to me, but I remind him I understand good English better. He has named the dog “Mandrake”. The servants ... were calling him “Rodji.” You should have heard Robin: “Rodji NAY! NAY Rodji. Yat [this] MANDRAKE!!!” and so forth. And to his nanny: “Nanny pi-ress [press] NAY! Is-pi-lay!” and so the ironing doesn't get done for another day, and they “pi-lay.”(January 18, 1950)

Oh, yes, Mandrake. I have always been a cat woman myself, but agreed with Robin's “Uncles” that a boy should have a dog. And happily took the first cute little white purebred puppy that was offered us. I had not heard of the bull terrier breed. And I do tend to leap before I look. Well, Mandrake grew into a perfect bull terror — sixty pounds of pure ferocity. And he elected to be my dog (why have so many dogs loved me? It's rarely mutual), sleeping at the foot of my bed, unwilling to let the bearer bring my morning tea tray in in peace, tolerating Robin but no real companion for him. But we put up with Mandrake for quite a while before finding him a home with one of the “Uncles.” Then we got a sweet little pie bitch puppy, Amanda, who loved Robin and promptly died of distemper. So it was back to cats. After some vicissitudes we got a pair of Siamese, Raja

and Rani, who lasted with us until we left Athens. The “Uncle” was no cat lover. One evening when he dined with us he caught them clawing at a carpet. “Corey, you'll have to get rid of those cats. Look what they're doing!” I observed that compared with Mandrake they were harmless. “But,” he responded, waving his stitched-and-bandaged hand and arm, “at least Mandrake doesn't destroy things.” Ah, definitions, definitions. Later —this was after Mama had arrived in late 1951 — the “Uncle” was transferred and we again had Mandrake on our hands. At last we found him a permanent home with a woman who had a plantation upcountry and kept packs of bull terriers to keep off the wild fauna. They could easily handle cheetah and even elephant, only tiger was a problem for them.

My car has arrived and is ideal for here — short wheelbase, good mileage and tight brakes.(to Pat, February 4, 1950).

One of the consulate drivers is going to give me lessons... I think two or three rides around town with him should be enough to acquaint me with the technique of driving around here. But there are some problems: (a) one drives on the left hand side of the road, (b) in this city of 2# million there is not one traffic light that I know of [constables were cheaper], (c) people don't cross at intersections, but anywhere they feel like, (d) more people walk in the streets than one the sidewalks, (e) in addition to people and automobiles, there are trams, buses (both double-decker), gharries (a “”Victoria” horse-and-buggy taxicab), numerous bullock carts, and people carrying things, sharing the roads, which are always winding and usually narrow.... Everyone assumed I would solve the whole problem by hiring a driver, but I already maintain three people besides Robin and me and can't take on another one, even at the equivalent of twenty dollars a month. (January 18, 1950).

Now it should be noted that my previous driving experience had been limited to a few trips covering the half mile between our house and town in Coeur d'Alene, with Mama along as instructor, and one disaster in Boise, also with Mama instructing, during which I drove over the curb turning into Harrison Blvd. and then, a couple of miles down Hill Road, gave up when we rounded a sharp bend and almost collided with a largish house being moved

on rollers. Mamma did the backing-up and turning round then, and that was the end of my early American driving career. I of course had no driver's license.

So here I was in Bombay, with a left-hand drive car in a country where theoretically traffic kept of the left side of the road. After the “two or three rides around town” with my Pathan instructor I took the test for driver's license. On the appointed day and hour for the test I, the Pathan, and one of our Madrasi clerks got in my car and discovered that its “tight brakes” had become nonexistent.

Narasimhan: “Do not concern yourself Madam. I shall make another appointment for your test.”

Corey: “No, I haven't time to do all this twice, and I need to be able to drive now. I'll take the test today as planned.”

Narasimhan: “But Madam! how are you taking driving test in car with no brakes?”

Corey: “Not in my car. I'll take it in Abdul's jeep.”

Narasimhan (aghast): “But Madam!! jeep is large station wagon with right-hand drive! You are not previously learning right-hand driving!”

Corey: “Well, I'll try it anyway. But you don't have to come along, Narasimhan. Abdul and I can take care of it.” (Abdul loftily silent; Pathans are said to enjoy danger and adventure).

Narasimhan, stiff-upper-lip, ready-to-die-in-line-of-duty: “No, Madam, I am accompanying you. Be not concerned with me.”

So off we went in Abdul's jeep, Narasimhan cowering in a back seat. Aside from my having to use opposite hands and feet for everything, in this large wagon I seemed to be sitting about a mile above the road. Also I learned that Abdul, ever adventurous, had adjusted the gas gauge so that even without foot on gas pedal the thing moved at at least twenty

miles per hour. We made it to the station, amid the typical melee described above, mostly on brake. There we were joined by a spruce police officer who sat besides me while Abdul joined a by now almost pale Narasimhan in the back. Somehow we careened around the city for a half hour or so and I even managed to park the thing back at the station without revealing my utter lack of talent (which continues) for parking. An only slightly wilted police officer jumped out, turned to me, and delivered the verdict:

“Madam, you have passed the driver's test. But Madam, you need more self-confidence!”

In the fulness of Indian bureaucratic time the license arrived, a beautiful accordion-like document which served me well at least once later, back in the States. But the great bargain of a car Bill Decker had negotiated for me was a continuous pain in the neck. A year or so later I sold it — at a considerable profit, though I had paid at least double what it was worth in the States — and got a new Chevrolet through the Foreign Service procurement system.

[Our] things are in process of being unpacked.... Every time Antonio's eye lights on a dish or table cloth or piece of silverware he breathes a sigh of relief. We've been getting along with next to nothing in that line. The first night he fixed dinner for us, he came in and said, “Tablecloth, Memsahib?” to which I replied, “I haven't one.” The expression that called forth leads me to think that a memsahib without a tablecloth — and other accoutrements — is in the same category as a burly queen without a G-string, but he has stood it manfully up to now. He is really very good — and what a cook! (to Pat, February 4, 1950).

Robin needed, and benefitted from, special coaching at his school, a small one run by Portuguese Jesuits. Here is an example of the reading dictation he brought home early on:

Potter's Gift — I

Mrs. Martha Trumbles had been to Ashford to do her shopping. She held a string bag 2 quite full of good things Pitter-patter! Went The rain and (sic)....Not exactly first-grade stuff in the States.

I am in process of making my official calls.... So far I've seen the Governor, Chief Minister, Passport Officer, dean of the Consular Corps, Chief Secretary, Customs Collector and Mayor, and have only the Chief Justice to go. (Ibid.)

A note on calls and calling cards. Today a card is typically a business card, with not only name, but business address, telephone and fax numbers, and very likely a logo. These were not unknown in the late 1940s, but were exchanged only by businessmen on business and were considered vulgar in other contexts. Social calls and cards were much more important. These cards bore only one's name. A box of engraved cards and little envelopes for them was as much a part of the rites of high school graduation as the yearbook and the class ring (are they still?). When new neighbors moved in, or when people for whom one's friends had sent letters of introduction moved to town, they were called upon, or the newcomers might call first, if they knew the introduction had preceded them. That opened social relations. Calls were then returned. Gentlemen as well as ladies called on one another, and a gentleman who had been entertained at dinner left a card the next day, sometimes accompanied by flowers, for his hostess.

Social calling rules were simple. Gentlemen left cards for the man of the house, for his wife, and for any other adult members of the family who lived at home. Since women never called on men, ladies left cards only for the ladies of the house.

Mama kept a small silver tray on the entrance hall table, on which reposed the cards that callers had left. I, too, did so in my dwellings until I moved to Chase Street in Chicago in 1978. There the entryway was too small for a table — and no one had left a card for a good ten years.

Official Foreign Service protocol ordained that officers' cards would carry their names only, engraved in Old English script. It differed from the social rules in that the lower-ranking newcomer always made the first calls and the calls need not be returned. A FSO newly arrived at a post would call on a fixed list of important local officials at their offices. These calls had both business and social import. He also called on the wives and other ladies of the houses of officers in his own embassy or consulate who were higher in rank than he. He might also need to call on the ranking officer and his own opposite numbers in other embassies or consulates with which the American establishment had warm official relations and a good deal of business.

What was I to do, given these rules about calling? I must make these calls, which in the case of calls on officials were at once business and social. All these official calls were male. A woman never called on a man.

Back in Foreign Service training, Romaine Alling had been no help at all. As far as she was concerned, there just wasn't any way to get from here to there. So I contrived my own solution. I had two sets of cards made up. One read “Corey Sanderson”; that was for official calls (i.e. calls on men). The other carried the strict social title for a divorced lady: “Mrs. Brown Sanderson.” At offices I left only the former; at houses I left only the latter, and only for the ladies. It seemed to work.

Mama and Daddy must have worried about our health:.... please don't worry about me or my health. I am really feeling fine and have had no compunctions about taking off when I haven't.... The dysentery is about licked by now....It's not so much a question of dirty food — although that is what brings it on — but ... it is some times before certain things, probably the spices, agree with you. Robin of course hasn't had a sign of it, as he does eat at home all the time, or if not, at the house of this or that set of friends, and never at public places. He is a picture of health and bloom — brown as a berry — swims at least once a day and sometimes oftener.... (February 6, 1950)

Following the common Western perception I had given Antonio orders that Robin's food should be seasoned only with small doses of salt and those spices common in the American diet. Yet when I lunched at home with him, as I did when I had no engagement elsewhere, I noticed he lacked appetite. But wasn't sick and wasn't getting thin. After a time I asked Antonio about it, and learned that Robin wanted to eat with him, and eat the same food he ate. Since what chotta sahib (little master) wanted was what chotta sahib got, he and Antonio would scarf down a Goan meal an hour or so before the lunch hour with me. Spices! Goan food may not be very good, but it is hot! I later discovered that Robin was also buying himself treats from the street vendors. So much for all the protection I assured Mama and Daddy about. Out of all this I came to the conclusion that whereas adult Americans had had resistance to intestinal germs and tolerance for spices sanitized out of them, children might have retained more of Mother Nature's own weapons. I also came to believe highly seasoned food is good for the digestion generally.

I didn't buy much for myself or Robin beyond current needs in clothing, furniture and so on. I did have a teak bunk-bed, desk and chest made for him, and a satinwood headboard and side tables to blend with the bird's eye maple bedroom furniture I hoped someday to inherit.

And the carpets. After I had been in India about a year I became interested in these beauties. The typical manner of buying them was to interview a series of little men who came round with a stack of them, leaving those one might like for closer inspection. For months I had a pile of folded-over carpets in a corner and two or three on the floor. I slowly chose the two Bokharas I still have, several others which have been distributed around the family, and after several months' argument with myself and hard bargaining with the rug man, committed the terrible extravagance of paying $400 for the glorious silk Kashan that has hung somewhere in every place I've lived in since. When Richard Temple, who knew these things better than anyone else I knew, saw it he was thrilled. He congratulated me on my patience, on waiting until I had found just the right thing. A couple of weeks

after I bought it the merchant came round and tried to buy it back. He was persistent, kept bringing other silk carpets, brighter, larger carpets. He wanted the worst way to make a trade, to get mine back, but I hung on to it.

The Timberlakes became my closest American friends. Tim, a thoroughly competent officer, feisty and yet usually tactful when that was called for. Julie sweet and bright, the perfect diplomatic wife. And fun people.

Last night I had Julie Timberlake, the CG's wife, over for dinner. Tim is in Washington temporarily and I thought of a very informal little hen party # deux. As usual I left the food planning up to Antonio, who is something of a wizard in the kitchen. We came up with soup, fish, meat, salad, vegetables, rolls, dessert and coffee, with appropriate wines and side dishes! This being my first venture in entertaining at home, I was naturally somewhat surprised! The other day I had three of the fellows from the office for lunch, rather on the spur of the moment. When we arrived all was fine and we had a drink and sat down to (sic) table. Then appeared two of my guests' bearers, solemnly serving while mine concentrated in the kitchen! I was quite unaware until then, of course, that they had fixed it all up among themselves. When I think of you giving lunches and dinners for twenty with no help! and doing so nicely, I wonder why it's necessary to have about one helper per guest around here. (February 6, 1950)

On Tim's return I got another surprise. Harry Spielman, our agricultural officer, had been transferred shortly after I arrived. While I was still in training his expected replacement, who had joined some of the training class sessions, introduced himself and we happily pored together over the Bombay post report. After poor Betsy Bradfield's death Martha Darke, with whom she had shared a largish house, was moving in with an American business family. I had just moved into my apartment and was not yet unhappy with it when I was asked if I wanted that house. It seemed too big for me and Robin, and knowing that the arriving agricultural officer had a wife and three or four children, I suggested it be held for them. .... jener Kraft, Die stets das B#se will und stets das Gute schafft.

Mephistopheles started from the other end, but I achieved a similar effect — except that I wanted good for others and got the bad for myself. Not an uncommon phenomenon, of course.

On Tim's return from Washington he called me into his office for the briefing customary for all officers when one was back from home base. In the course of it I asked when we could expect the new agricultural officer — hadn't he been scheduled to arrive about now?

Tim shot me a glance, then , “How well did you know him?” I told him I had met him in the class, had several coffee breaks and checked out the post report with him. He seemed a nice fellow. When would he and his family arrive?

“He isn't coming. I don't suppose you've seen this. It made me wonder why you had been so solicitous about housing for them.” And handed me a clipping of a column of Mary Haworth's, a sort of Washington-Post Ann Landers of the time. I don't remember the exact wording but it went something like this:

Dear Mary Haworth:

My husband is being sent by his agency to a south Asian post soon, and our children and I are to go with him. A few weeks ago I found an unfinished letter in his typewriter. It was to the man whom he will replace at that post, who is a bachelor. It said that an extremely attractive young woman Foreign Service Officer would be coming out there shortly, so the post would be brightened up a bit. My husband told me he and she had talked about the post together. I am not sure it went beyond that, but Mary, I am terribly worried and upset. What shall I do?

Mary Haworth sensibly suggested that there was nothing on which to base the lady's worries. But why did she publish it? No names were mentioned — but there was only one young woman American foreign service officer in all south Asia.

I was dumbfounded. I said to Tim, quite truthfully, that I had not laid eyes on the man other than in the class and at coffee breaks.

Well, said Tim, I told the Department I wouldn't have him here. If you two are having an affair it would be bad for morale all round; if you aren't I don't want an imbecile female like that on my hands.

So that agricultural officer never came to Bombay. He probably never had any other foreign assignment, either, because Tim mentioned that when a principal officer flatly turned down someone outside the regular service they usually weren't considered for other such feathers in their caps. Too bad for him. One of Harry Spielman's successors, Giles Hubert, was black, as was one of the USIS officers who came on board. The Foreign Service was ahead of its time in making places for minorities and women.

Meanwhile that perfectly good house went to another consular family.

In February I was sent to Delhi for a week's work and orientation, and took some leave so as to see some of the great sights of India:

... I negotiated a car and driver yesterday and am seeing Agra in style! The Taj Mahal by moonlight is beautiful beyond description — no one can tell me now that the Orientals don't love their wives!... also King Akbar's tomb and other things [notably Fatepur Sikhri outside Delhi; it is one of the great palace complexes of the world]. Agra is full of history and art. Not the least interesting to me was the 120-mile drive down from Delhi. It was my first view of the Indian countryside. Passed through Mathura, the center of one of the strictest Hindu sects. Saw a lot, and believe me, was seen! I felt like I was as much an object of curiosity as the things and people I saw were to me.... we're in the throes of a severe cold wave — down to 45_ and we're all freezing. Thank heaven Agra and Delhi are full of fireplaces and I have some warm things. It's been 55_ in Bombay. (February 13, 1950).

The Indian countryside. Between Delhi and Agra it is flat, and in February looked like a desert. How could all the people I saw along and in the road — people in bullock carts, women under huge burdens of wood or pots, the very occasional truckload — how could they sustain themselves?

It was a dusty ride, inducing great thirst. I hadn't yet learned to bring bottled boiled water along on trips. At Mathura I asked the driver to stop at one of the thatch roadside teahouses and get us something to drink. It would be hot sweet tea in which the milk and water had been boiled together — not very tasty, but anyway wet. He did so, and apparently asked if there was some private place where the memsahib could be comfortable. The proprietor must have misunderstood and the place one with other functions besides dispensing tea, for he led us into a little lean-to furnished only with a charpoy (wood bed frame with rope or heavy tape woven to support the body). I merely shook my head in the back-and-forth motion indicating “No,” but the driver was incensed! Insulted, I think.

Back in Delhi I met the ambassador and most of the other embassy officers. I was given piles of reports and other materials to go through, and learned a good deal. Two of them stick in my mind: first, that (carefully classifying his report “Secret”) a senior embassy official took supercilious and I thought really colonialist exception to an Indian counterpart's using his sixteen-year-old daughter as official hostess — “she is educated [and therefore spoke English] but is much too young for such a function; the man has a wife.” Did he think to guess that perhaps the wife lived in purdah and spoke no English?

Second, I visited the biographical-files section, where two young officers were supposed to keep tabs on Indians of interest to the United States. I had a list of people in our consular district whom we in Bombay wanted to know more about. Now I should say the embassy was in the throes of massive expansion, from a five- or six-officer outfit to one treble that size. After all, there had been an American embassy in India for only five or six years. There were more American personnel than desks for them to work at. This by the way was

no doubt only the first of many such expansions. God knows how many Americans are at the Delhi embassy now.

My counterparts took my list, searched their files, and came up with almost nothing less than two years old. Quite a bit before then, though. “Geez,” said one, scratching his head, “They only had one guy then, and he only did this biographical job part time. How did he get so much done?” I didn't say what crossed my mind then and many too many times thereafter in the Foreign Service, namely, that he had put his finger on the problem. Too many people falling all over each other very soon reach the point of diminishing return of useful work. Six dolts can't do a better job than one competent person. And so on.

Off office time I was well entertained by a number of officers and their families. Least well, I think, by Mrs. Henderson, whom I remember only as distinctly condescending when we lunched at the embassy residence, after she had let me wait half an hour beyond the time she had set. While waiting I counted nineteen pairs of things in the faux-Federal decor of the residence reception room. Dreary elegance.

On the whole, though, the embassy people were most pleasant, and hospitable to me. I especially remember Howard Donovan, the feisty Counselor of Embassy, who was not universally popular among Foreign Service personnel in India but who seemed to me a very sensible sort. And dear Captain Cortner, the Naval attach#. A widower, he had his little daughter with him in Delhi. He told me how he spent many evenings sewing dresses for her! Delhi not being the ideal geographical spot for watching the physical part of the Indian navy, he also said he would ask his Indian naval contacts in Bombay to get in touch with me, and he coached me in what the various vessels looked like and asked me to keep an eye on what showed up in Bombay harbor. I was flattered with this, given the several World War II veterans on the Bombay staff.

Of later trips to Delhi I remember only that one took place in the Delhi summer. It could reach 120_F. in the shade then. In the absence of air conditioning, how were the embassy

offices kept bearable? Well, on visiting it I at first thought a major renovation must be under way. The whole place was draped in wide strips of heavy cloth, flowing over windows and walls. Every few feet there was a rickety ladder running from the ground to the roof, and a small army of little men in nothing but loin cloths and turbans, who made a sort of continuous ant-chain going up and down them. Then I saw that atop each turban was a metal bucket filled with water. The men would climb to the roof, splash the water over it and the draperies, climb back down again, fill their buckets, climb back up again ... all day in that heat, to keep the embassy rooms cool. A version of the ice box Mama fixed up in that hovel in Coeur d'Alene.

I finally fired the nanny, who in addition to tippling my bottle occasionally, did a lousy job of laundry and took to departing in the evenings when I needed her. In her place I've hired another boy. He is quite good, and with two boys I can entertain more easily. Antonio is a good cook but hardly efficient by our standards — he works practically all day fixing meals just for us! chops vegetables into atom-size pieces for soup, etc. Now I'm getting more service and a better kept house for the same money. One has to get the hang of housekeeping in this new manner. The boys also do better with Robin, I think. (March 10, 1950).

Both my boys are good Catholics from Goa and they [and Robin] go over Catechism and stuff when I'm not there to help. I really have a jewel in Rafael, the bearer. He is wonderful with Robin and I can feel absolutely sure that all will be well when Robin is with him. The other afternoon, having nothing else to do, and with no suggestions from me, they took off for a trip to the museum.(April 6, 1950)

The kitchen sometimes looks like a barnyard, because all the stuff comes in alive. Occasionally I hear loud yelps and cacklings, which means Dog and Chicken have discerned each other's presence. Robin is usually in on it all, including the kill, and takes great interest. The other morning ... he came rushing into the bedroom saying, “Mommy, mommy, come in and see what we've got in the kitchen!” I went out and found four huge

lobsters thrashing round in the sink. In about half an hour he reported that “Now Antonio has them in the pot and Mommy they've turned red!” He still enjoys beating eggs and such, which no doubt puzzles the cook, but they all get along beautifully. (April 4, 1950)

End of a somewhat harrowing day... Honestly, sometimes I feel like a cross between Mr. Anthony and Simon Legree, and there have been at least thirty people in my office since nine this morning, each with his own problem, which of course is the BIG one to him. It's something of a challenge being successful in this job and still not becoming one of the most detested members of the community — as you can understand a visa officer undertakes a job whose public relations are prima facie bad. We just can't do for people what they want in lots of cases. But I guess it's good training in diplomacy. (Ibid.)

Five o'clock, and I have to wait while a lawyer and his client thrash out in three languages whether a draft of a deposition is what they said or not, so I'll take a few moments for a letter.(March 30, 1950)

[Robin] came home [from a beach picnic] with a collection of fancy shells and vivid descriptions of how difficult it was to disengage the original residents from them. I didn't go as, what with two ships full of Americans in and a few other complications, I couldn't risk being thirty miles away if needed. Believe me, things can happen that the most imaginative liar couldn't think up.... Spent Friday afternoon rushing around the docks and local police offices in a boiling sun, trying to straighten out a woman who gaily boarded an Italian ship at Australia without a single visa in her passport, making a great tour and all that. [She] arriving in Bombay and not being let off, the whole thing fell in our lap. Her ire at the local government people wasn't soothed when I asked her what she thought a foreigner's chances would be of taking a sightseeing tour through New York under similar circumstances. (Please don't repeat this to anyone — it's not secret stuff, of course, but it's just best not to publicize office affairs. I thought it would amuse you). (March 19, 1950)

We've had more visiting firemen than you could shake a stick at... as between that, the FS Inspector's scheduled visit late this month, and what seems like every American ship in the Eastern hemisphere going through, we've had one week of it! Last Sunday I was duty officer and spent the day shinnying up and down gangplanks of freighters, clearing them, etc. Arrived two hours late for a luncheon party for which I'd dressed in a white suit before coming to work, covered with coal dust from one end to the other. It's a good thing I enjoy this sort of thing... (May 6, 1950).

As duty officer I could shinny up and down gangplanks, but the switchboard defeated me. I never did learn to get a call in or out on it. And it wasn't that suit, but another dress, that got its full skirt caught in a greasy ventilator and was ruined. It took several exchanges of letters with the IRS, who took “Corey” to be male, before they gave up and allowed my deduction claim for it.

[The FS Inspector is here and] I never saw such a thundering herd of visa applicants, citizenship cases, passport services, destitute Americans (only one at the moment but ye gods what a corker!), people wanting the lowdown on how to ship dead bodies from the States, Indian boy scouts going to the US jamboree, two-year-old wards of Indian missions tearing off with lady missionaries to visit the States,... sailors on leave and misbehaving, visiting firemen wanting — and getting if they're official or important — entertainment from those whom they're supporting with taxes, suicides of American stewardesses on ships (only one of those too thank the Lord)... and minor items I've forgotten, all in the last ten days. (May 25, 1950).

The “corker” was a young man who showed up at the consulate one day, completely broke. I do not remember how he got there, but he demanded that the consulate look after him. All we could do was see that he got minimal sustenance until a ship came in on its way to the States. Then he could be signed on as an unpaid seaman and return to his country. This didn't suit him at all. I told him to think it over for a day or so, and come back and we could discuss the few options. He did come back, but insisted on seeing the

Consul General. Tim called me in on the interview. When Tim asked him how he proposed to support himself in India, he replied that he guessed he'd just have to go on relief. This was too much for me. Relief indeed! I asked him who, or what agency, he thought was offering relief to the maimed beggar children who wandered the streets, to the thousands whose only homes were the sidewalks of Bombay. Whether he finally agreed to ship back or whether he simply disappeared I do not remember. I do remember Tim dressing me down a bit for being “too positive, not feminine enough.” Maybe he was right.

.... the new (U.S.) Security Act — all visas canceled, people getting hysterical and doing silly things like canceling their passages and so forth and then coming to see us, telegrams, phone calls and heaven knows what from Paris and London and all other places en route where hapless people suddenly discover their visas are no good.... I've given out press interviews here saying in effect don't get excited but it has little effect.... the Ambassador is down for a few days, made a big speech yesterday, and we're all in for a grueling round of teas, receptions, luncheons, dinners and so forth... I don't see how he stands it! (October 25, 1950).

With notable exceptions — especially among the medical missionaries, the Catholic priests, and at the American Marathi Mission, and among a few of the business people as well — one could not feel that the local Americans represented the best of this country. By and large the missionaries were a self-righteous lot, holding both the pagan Indians and the sinful non-missionary Americans in shocked low esteem. By and large the business people and their families all too soon got used to their privileges and saw only the hardships of their lot and the shortcomings and stupidities of India. Few of the common ways of spending leisure time in America were available there. As a result these people, by no means an extraordinary lot, amused themselves with drink and gossip and various expressions of general dissatisfaction, ill health and so on. That explains the doctor's connection of my bacillary dysentery with unhappiness in “this terrible place.” Another doctor called it “Memsahib's disease — the ailment of women who have nothing to do.”

You are so right about the impressions Americans give out here. Of course I can't say it officially, but the way Americans act makes me positively ashamed of them.... Here in India [they] are of course terribly rich by local standards, and live very comfortably by any standards. Women who have washed their husbands' sox regularly take about six weeks to start howling at and about their six or eight or ten dumb, lazy servants, etc. In general, the men of the American community associate with Indians in business, but the women won't stoop so low as to attend mixed parties or anything like that. Consulate people have to stand up against a barrage of criticism for doing so, of course, and you can imagine that the attack is concentrated on the gals. Furthermore, everyone drinks like fish. There is a greater desire for long cool ones in this climate but it is still not necessary to carry it as far as many people do. Lastly, about ninety percent of them forget their blessings, forget that they are living in a style to which they will never again be accustomed, think India is the last post on the way to savagery, want to go home on the next boat .... You can imagine the reaction these attitudes produce in a society which is proud, puritanical, prohibitionist, and anything but tolerant itself.

The other night I went to a dinner party where I was the only foreigner present.... well-educated upper-middle-class Indians, who had had no previous contact with Americans. Apparently their ideas were entirely formed by the movies and by hearsay.... they had gone to great lengths to lay in a formidable supply of liquor. I could see they were very surprised by my appearance — no dyed blonde hair or too much makeup, no loud voice, no over-revealing clothes, etc. Then when drink was urgently suggested [this was during the treatment for amoebic, and I wasn't supposed to take alcohol at all, but saw I must]... I at last settled for a beer [which] came in a tall ice-filled glass, so you can imagine I was more than satisfied with one, but got it all down. Later I learned they had even set aside a special room for me to drink in if I wished.... that is the sort of shock one gets when one realizes exactly what they think of us, and logically so, from movies, newspaper headlines, and the Americans they observe at a distance. Don't publicize any of this, of course — we'd probably have another Senate investigation or something! (6/7/50)

...the other day I took five little ones to the zoo. One of these kids has apparently picked up some of the nastier traits of his parents, and continually makes disparaging remarks about Indians, etc. A poor old woman was selling peanuts, and as is the custom had them spread out in neat little piles on the sidewalk. This big lummox just made a running bound through the whole thing, on purpose, and of course destroyed most of her working capital. It was quite a fracas since she spoke a language I didn't speak and naturally was furious. I tried to apologize and paid her and it got smoothed over, but I was kind of furious myself. My only consolation was that I know Robin wouldn't do such a mean trick. I tried to explain that such jokes are all right played against people who can afford it, but not when they are as poor as most people around here are. The kid is just like a lot of his American elders, I'm sorry to say. (April 4, 1950)

And that kid's kids may have been among those American brats I saw trying hard to accomplish pandemonium in a railway station in Japan in 1985. I rather hope Michael Fay will serve as salutary proof that worms may turn.

Mama and Daddy were surprised that such people were allowed out into the wide world to disgrace us:

Re the quality of our Americans abroad — Washington screens the State Department and other government people very carefully of course, but can't be so particular about others. If someone is obviously going to injure the prestige of the United States abroad, he will not be issued a passport. But this is pretty extreme and can't be done except in a very few cases. The things which cause adverse comment aren't the things which can be pointed out as basis for refusal of passports — it's just that we're too rich, drink too much, are too noisy and brassy, etc. Sometimes I doubt if we'd be liked even if we were on the average delightful cultured people .... because the powerful must use their power, and are never liked. We have inherited Britain's role, I'm afraid. (July 20, 1950)

Something of the same sort — Americans hanging together and belittling the locals and their ways — could be seen in almost any foreign place. In India they also tended to ape their run-of-the-mill British predecessors in this respect, and this no doubt from the same root causes as with the British: ignorance, fear and lack of self confidence in an unfamiliar milieu. Some of them had no idea on which coast of India they had landed when they got to Bombay. Fear not primarily of physical violence, but fear of strangeness in general. And India offered plenty of strangeness to Westerners. This fear was not entirely unjustified. What of the poor woman who opened up her baby's bathinette one morning and found a nest of newborn cobras inside? And Westerners, especially Americans, in India tended to suffer from all sorts of unfamiliar ailments arising out of the relative lack of sanitation as we understand it (Indians', or at least Hindus', definitions of what constituted pollution were vastly different from ours). I myself got a bad dose of amoebic dysentery and several of the “three hundred undiagnosed diseases of the alimentary tract” (if they were undiagnosed, how did the doctors know there were three hundred of them?, I wondered). All this did bring on a sometimes neurotic fear of germs and infection. I recall the woman who among other precautions several times a day wiped all the doorknobs in her apartment with Lysol solution.

Apartment kitchens were sometimes furnished with western-style sinks, but usually there was only a floor drain in one corner with a cold-water tap above it. Here the cook would squat and peel vegetables and so on. Then he would prepare them either at a table or on a board elsewhere on the floor. Cooks went barefoot inside the house, as did most Indians. A typical American family whom I met on their arrival in Bombay asked me to ask my servants to find some servants for them. When she instructed the new cook, the memsahib was careful to insist that he peel vegetables and do other food preparation on the table she had had put in the kitchen, and not at the corner drain, and first he must each time wash the table with Lysol solution. About two days later, when I was having a peaceful lunch at home for a change, my cook and the other one both came in the dining room, weeping. The memsahib had become very upset and had fired her cook. What had

he done wrong? He had followed her directions to the letter. He had washed the table she provided with Lysol solution, and done all the food and vegetable preparation on that table. Hardly had they returned to my kitchen after I told them that I would look into the whole thing right away than the memsahib burst in, hysterical. “This ghastly place — I told him he had to wash the table and to fix all our food on it — when I came in the kitchen, there he was, working away squatting barefoot on top of the table!!!” I think that family didn't last long in India.

Through John Hlavacek (”Check”), the UP correspondent for India, I met the Natarajans, charming dear people, old friends of Check's. They and I immediately took a great liking to one another. “Nat” was editor of one of the best English-language dailies in the country. Sophie had an Oxford or Cambridge degree. They were among the few with whom Check would talk about books and such. We spent many a happy evening # quatre. He was Hindu, she Muslim. They had no children. This kind of marriage there was very much like a black-white union in the United States. It usually meant broken ties with both families, as I think it had with the Natarajans. In late 1951 I was successful in getting their names on a list of “leaders” who traveled to the United States at USIA expense, and to arrange that they would visit not only New York and Washington, where Nat would see the U.S. press in action, but also Chicago and the West, and be squired around here and there by my relatives and old friends. They never forgot that trip. On the day of our departure from India, when we were in our cabin and the ship about to unmoor, a messenger arrived with something in a paper sack “for Sundaresan memsahib.” It was the Shiva figure that has graced every living room of mine since, a treasure they had brought back from a trip to South India and that I had admired. We lost touch many years ago, during my dead funk of the late 1950s. To my lasting regret. They being perhaps twenty years older than I, they are probably no longer with us. But I still love them both.

It was early on, only a few weeks after we had moved into the apartment and shortly after the Mary Haworth episode — and after I had given up our chance for the house that had previously been available, that I found us in what I thought of as Real Trouble. Our

apartment left much to be desired, but it was, I had thought, an improvement over the boarding house. And Robin was having a good time, especially since “Uncle Joe” was so nice to him, inviting him to come up to his place for treats, and so on. I don't remember who, or if it was more than one person, who suggested to me that I ought to watch out for my boy in Joe Belehrad's company. Now Joe was a big handsome iron-jawed fellow, dark, with a Cary Grant dimple in his chin. He looked the picture of masculinity, and nothing in his speech or gestures suggested otherwise to me. I at first dismissed the warnings as simply malicious. But then I began to notice all sorts of strange men whom Joe seemed to entertain singly and in batches. Also, Antonio and Rafael seemed reserved about him. They said nothing — but then they were servants, and well knew their place. When on at least two occasions I was awakened in the middle of the night by loud goings-on above, male shouts of “Joe don't come near me, I never want to have anything to do with you again,” and so on, desperation replaced dismissal.

I knew such a thing as homosexuality existed, but like most of my contemporaries I knew nothing else about it except that it was “abnormal” and “evil” and would invariably involve pedophilia. Thus, and especially given the hints that had been dropped, I took it for granted that Joe's interest in Robin was something very bad for Robin. Rob says Joe never made a pass at him, and from today's vantage point I see that I rushed to conclusions unjustly. But at the time I thought I must protect my child from something unspeakable.

Despite the crimp it put in his style, and without saying why, I decreed that Robin should under no circumstances leave our apartment without Antonio or Rafael along, unless the parents of one of his little friends had invited him to their place. Not even with “Uncle Check” or the other “uncles”; I couldn't afford to pinpoint Belehrad as the cause of my prohibitions. Still, this was a poor and at best temporary solution. I HAD TO GET US OUT OF THAT APARTMENT.

But how? There were now no vacancies among the houses and apartments allocated to the Consulate by the housing authorities; I would have to find one “off allocation.” But how to do this? Housing for Europeans (and for Indians as well) was terribly scarce in Bombay. My fairly broad acquaintance among Bombay officialdom did not include the housing authorities. That in fact was part of Belehrad's job. I didn't know whom to go to, or whom to bribe.

And I could confide in no one. Not only because such a thing was extremely serious at that moment, when Washington was already in an uproar about “queers in the State Department.” How could I support any such allegation? By asking people to stay in my tiny hot one-bedroom apartment with us until the next night a wild party took place upstairs? Hardly. Furthermore, Belehrad was Tim Timberlake's White-haired Boy. For the first (by no means the last) time I witnessed a situation in which a boss had “fallen in love with” one of his young men — not in the sexual sense, but in the sense of believing this one was special beyond all others, of brooking no criticism of him, seeing only his shining virtues. This affliction is not at all the same thing as being a mentor. It involves no assessment of the other beyond some sort of belief in his excellence and devotion to his advancement in every possible area. Why these “boys” invariably turn out to be sour apples I have never figured out, but it was not hard to figure out some of Belehrad's attraction in this case. He could be charming, and he saw to it that Tim's slightest wish, or the slightest wish of Julie or Tim's kids, was fulfilled A.S.A.P. and sometimes sooner. He was a lot less regarding of the rest of us, and of his duties as shipping officer — but Tim seemed blissfully unaware of that, and was sharply disbelieving when anyone tried to tell him or was moved to complain about some negligence of Belehrad's. For me to let it be known why I was so eager to move would be dangerous.

Then hope appeared. There was an applicant for a refugee visa, an unpleasant middle-aged Central European anti-Semite who regularly visited the consulate and made my life difficult for a few minutes each time. Information in our files indicated that not only did he

not fulfil the legal requirements for refugee status, but that some of his business dealings in India were highly questionable. On being queried by the Department about his status I had forwarded the relevant information to them, only to receive a nasty letter from a Congressmen some of whose constituents wanted this man allowed in as a refugee and had signed affidavits of support for him, followed by a telegram from the Department in effect saying “Give him the visa, you dolt.”

This fellow had a shabby apartment in Colaba, a mixed Indian-European neighborhood at Bombay's southernmost tip. It was a decent though not fashionable part of town. There were indeed families living in carton-and-burlap shelters they had made on the sidewalk, there was indeed an ever-more emaciated cow tethered at the corner beneath the apartment, whose morning bellows could tear the heart. But so there were such people and cows — thousands of both — all over Bombay. The apartment was not far from Robin's school and our friends the Imbreys and the Temples.

When my “refugee” next came to the office, I implicitly let him know that one visa would be available for him if one apartment became available for me. Agreed. Immediately I went to our executive officer and begged him to get the authorities to allocate that apartment to me. I gave as my reasons the smallness and poor ventilation of our present apartment. It wasn't quite decent, I said, for a six-year-old boy to have to share a bedroom with his mother. Furthermore, I said, Robin was highly sensitive to heat and might well fall ill during the oncoming hot season; the other place was old, had high ceilings and broad verandahs. And when the monsoon did come all of the things we had no place for except on our tiny verandah would be water-logged and ruined.

One fine day three weeks later I watched that old villain of a “refugee” clamber triumphantly aboard a ship bound for New York, where presumably he lived out his days in his usual manner.

I finally have got definite possession of the new flat and am in the throes of negotiating all the necessary details. I somehow persuaded the landlord to paint [i.e. calcimine] the place — a marvelous thing in this housing-shortage town....(April 4, 1950).

At this point I am more uncertain than ever of just where we'll be laying our heads in the next couple of weeks. After no end of delay, etc., the old boy in the flat I want left and it's been vacant since the 3d. But the housing authorities are insisting that he hasn't gone yet. Since I saw him leave, I can't quite agree with them. Meanwhile I've looked at ... a 2-bedroom flat in a brand new apt. house in the nicest section of town, right by the seaside, near Robin's friends, etc. [that one fell through for me](May 8, 1950).

The biggest news of the last week is that at last I got damn sick and tired of the housing situation... I had been nice and patient up to now, but what with the monsoon coming and I having done all the spade work myself, I did feel that when negotiations arrived at the point where I had to hand them over to our exec and administrative officers, a little action could be called for. So I kept getting negative reports that they and the housing authorities were “keeping it in mind” and so forth, and last week got very sick of it. So I made a practice of visiting our exec's office twice a day — he's a bachelor and just a trifle intimidated, I think — and really pouring it on. Result: one house, now being painted, and should be ready for our occupancy by June 1. I'm afraid I'm just not a bureaucrat! (May 15, 1950).

You were optimistic about my moving on the 15th. I practically had to blackmail the local authorities into releasing the flat to me, but after only 2 weeks' delay got it on Friday. On Saturday the painters started in. I have been getting up at 6, going over there from 7:30 to 9 to supervise the day's work, shopping during lunch hours (when I haven't an engagement that is) and from 5 to 5:30. Today the electricians arrived to move the refrigerator from one of the bedrooms, where the former tenant had it, into the kitchen. Also to replace all the sockets, fuses, plugs and other easily removed objects connected with the electric supply, which he apparently removed and sold, along with everything else except a wood-burning cookstove circa 1850 which is sitting in the middle of the

kitchen. After painters and electricians get through, I will go through a couple of days with hamals and sweepers, with emphasis on the importance of elbow grease and ammonia in cleaning some of the eleven years' accumulation of filth off all non-painted surfaces like the bathroom for instance. Then arrives my pretty new furniture, and lastly and I hope in an orderly fashion ourselves and belongings. (May 25, 1950).

We ... are finally moved in...The dining chairs haven't arrived, they forgot to send a bed for me (mine hasn't arrived from the Sts.)... they forgot a chest of drawers for Robin and ... they made a love seat instead of a [sofa, which] I sent back....We have no refrigeration, since the frig went off and is awaiting repairs — also a matter of a couple of days but I miss ice in this 96 degree heat. They told me it would be like this sometimes! and now I believe it, although how everything happens is beyond me... we'll be very nicely settled by Saturday, I think, and are already more comfortable than heretofore in Bombay.(June 7, 1950)

Thus within six months of our arrival in Bombay we had moved twice and I had gone through the first of my many, many experiences of for practical purposes rebuilding an apartment into which I moved.

It may have been just as well that we were delayed in getting into the new apartment:

I've spent a fairly interesting ten days. Last Sunday morning we went to Mass and a baseball game. Then, as Robin was still weekending with his friend Billy, I went up to Hlavacek's for lunch and a big post-game party. Feeling fine. Right after lunch I got a small “gas pain,” so took some bicarbonate and lay down. The pain didn't get any better so after a couple of hours I took some bitters in water and lay down. It began to get much worse, and by 6:30 I was only able to lie on the bed in one position and couldn't even turnover. I was very ashamed of myself because the rest of the party was going strong. At 7:30 “Check” said he was going to call a doctor, and while I thought I would feel foolish to learn I just had eaten too many baked beans, I said it would be all right. Well, to make a long

story short, the doctor took a blood count and did some examining and sent me straight to the hospital, where I've been since, until noon today. It seems that fool who dosed me with pills for dysentery before hadn't bothered with any real diagnosis, and what I had was not a simple case of bacillary dysentery, but amoebic which by last Sunday had developed into a nice big tumor on the scar tissue where my appendix used to be! As soon as I had my first shot of emetine the pain went away — it was the worst pain I've ever had, not excepting labor — and I have felt fine since. But I had to stay in hospital for eight days and got a shot every day, besides a lot of other pills, some of which I still have to take. My blood count is down to normal which means that the amoebas inside the tumor have been killed and the tumor is dissolving. I had a lovely private room and lots of company and loads of flowers, and got some reading done.... Thank goodness, this is an “illness in line of duty” so Uncle Sam will pay for it. I am going back to work again Wednesday. “Check” said he was glad I had the painful kind because if I hadn't I would still be running around thinking I was all cured. But I really am now. I am so glad it happened to me instead of Robin.... [who] has spent the week with “Check” and his four bachelor roommates. There's a swimming pool in their compound and some of his best boy friends live there, so you can imagine he's had a wonderful time and I'll have a hard time getting him back here!....[he] is going to join his school group of Cub Scouts — and is he thrilled about it! He says he gets to start practicing how to tie knots pretty soon, so I imagine we'll be living in a welter of fancy twists for a while....(Monday, April 24, 1950)

Had a bad scare the other day — our pup got too frisky and bit Robin. I was sitting in the office and got a call to come home, “Robin's eye has been badly hurt.” I tore home wondering if he had any eye left and was of course relieved to find that the eye itself was ok. He had a beautiful shiner, though. Besides that all dogs in India are rabid until proven otherwise, and even though Mandrake has had rabies shots recently, poor R. had to have four — in the stomach — one each morning at 8:30, which was a beautiful start to days which also included the usual work only more so, the Inspector, me throwing up after every meal (Aureomycin treatment for dysentery — this is the last gasp of what I think is a

successful cure), moving, and so forth. This all sounds kind of harrowing, so I'm pleased to report that R. is fine, I am feeling better all the time, the Inspector was very nice, and life is really quite satisfactory — just full! (June 7, 1950)

I remember those fearful rabies shots that poor little Robin had to undergo far better than I do the side effects of the Aureomycin. Brave soldier as he was, he couldn't contain a howl towards the end of each long deep painful injection. I am told this procedure has been made vastly less painful now. I hope so.

And I was cured, and I was lucky, much luckier than poor Margaret Amory.

Jim Amory was my predecessor in the consular section, a sweet quiet young man with a sweet quiet pallid blonde wife Margaret. They had no children. They had been in Bombay about a year when I got there. Margaret had contracted amoebic and couldn't seem to shake it. I gather she had never been a very energetic or positive person, and she almost seemed to cling to this debilitating ailment of hers, almost not to wish it gone. Her conversation was strictly limited to minute descriptions of the various unpleasant treatments she was undergoing, and the prospect of going back to the States. This latter was imminent in Spring 1950, as the Department had decided to bring Jim and Margaret back home and, it was hoped, to make a cure for Margaret more likely.

Very shortly before they left Jim came into my office one day for a confidential chat. You can guess the rest. Jim was sweet and quiet, but he was young and a man. He had fallen in love with Isabel, the thirty-ish British wife of a local British businessman. Isabel was everything Margaret wasn't — dark, lively, witty, good conversation, great fun, bursting with health and sex. Jim said he was going to take Margaret home and stick with her until she was better and able to get along without him. Then he would come back and he and Isabel would marry — presumably Isabel would divorce her husband. Or so Jim thought.

So the Amorys left. Isabel was as gay as ever. She took up with a succession of young men. She had only been toying with Jim. Her husband didn't seem to mind any of this. Maybe he had his own little games on the side.

I spent an evening with the Amorys when I got back to Washington. They of course were still married. Jim was still sweet and even quieter than theretofore. Margaret had been cured of the amoebic, but now she suffered from several other ailments. She, too, was if anything more wan than ever. I don't know what happened to them after that.

We were burglarized Saturday night (or Sunday morning) about 4 AM, and fortunately the guy got only my wallet and about 50 rupees, instead of everything in the house. I am feeling especially stupid because I got Mandy especially for a watchdog. Well, he barked and growled something awful, raced around and generally raised Ned, but I was so sleepy I just told him to shut up and went back to sleep! Maybe I should have invited the burglar to tea, too!.... The whole thing has sad repercussions, though, because usually the memsahib accuses the servants when something like this happens, so they are all quarreling with each other and accusing each other no matter how much I tell them to shut up and get on with their work. I am sure it wasn't any of them because (a) there have been lots of professional burglaries in the neighborhood lately, (b) they wouldn't come in at that hour and the dog wouldn't have barked at them, (c) I have had as much as 1000 rupees in my purse — but won't again! — recently... and if one of them wanted to steal he'd take that not 50, at the risk of a good job, (d) they know where the silver and my jewelry is and wouldn't be satisfied with Rs.50, and they all have clean records with the police. (June 21, 1950)

Burgling that place was easy, since anyone who could shinny a short floor up a wooden column could land on the verandah and from there through any door or window — all open to catch any possible breeze. A couple of weeks thereafter a burglar struck again in the middle of the night. This time, not being so doped up with medicine, I was ready for him. When I heard him slither over the verandah rail I quietly got out of bed, picked up the

heavy brass cylindrical cigarette box on my bedside table, and when he came in the door I threw it at him. I missed (was blind without my glasses and in the dark) but it made a big crash, causing rapid slithering back down the column and raising servants and neighbors.

After two burglaries I came to be on pleasant terms with the director of police for the Colaba district, a British holdover from the Raj. He would come by for a drink after work, and would take Robin and me for spins in the country, said it did his car good to get it up to speed. And he gave me a Beretta .944 from the police office collection, or perhaps it was one he had taken off a dead German in the North African campaign. He said I should have some real protection. If I would register it as required with the authorities, but say I had had it in the States and that it had arrived packed with my other this things, his own risk in passing it to me would be eliminated. Two or three times thereafter he took me to some vacant beach or field and coached me in how to load it, cock it, shoot it, and so on.

I never got very good or very confident with any gun. At bottom I felt quite safe in India, safer, certainly, than I would have felt in many areas of Chicago. But it was a sweet gesture and I was grateful. I did indeed register it with the authorities, fabricating some passages in letters home about “Martin's” gun so as to cover tracks not only with the local authorities but also the consulate should some question arise. And one fine Sunday morning I took Robin, the servants, and the gun down to nearby Colaba beach, which fortunately was otherwise empty at that moment. I did a bit of target practice for them, then I said, “I am going to hide this gun in our house, and I am going to shoot the next burglar who tries to rob us. If any of you should come across the gun, don't touch it; it might kill you.”

Next morning I smuggled the gun to the office in my purse, wrapped it up, labeled the package “C. Sanderson, personal,” put it in the back of the bottom drawer of my safe and left it there for the rest of our stay in Bombay. We never had another burglary. Word had gotten round that this memsahib was not to be fooled with.

The wind was up otherwise, too. A neighbor of mine, another Central European but this one a genuine refugee and a nice old fellow with whom I regularly exchanged pleasantries when we met on the street, invited himself to my place for tea one day. After the suitable formalities he lowered his voice and imparted his message to me: “Madam, please be careful. This house is being watched. I see them watching constantly — you should ask your people to investigate.” He was quite right, the place was being watched. From shortly after the second burglary until we moved out of that neighborhood, a little constable stood on the corner across our street, day and night. My policeman was not taking any chances, gun or no gun. Good.

In the middle of another night I was awakened when something bit me. When I turned on the light I found a couple of little round black bugs scurrying for cover. But I was faster than they. I caught one, sealed it in an envelope, and next time I visited Dr. Choksi to collect the weekly report on the incidence of a number of diseases in the district — this and its forwarding to Washington being one of my routine duties — I showed him the bug. What was it? I knew only that it bit, and stung.

Dr. Choksi was Chief Public Health Officer for Bombay. He was a tiny burned-out Parsi who had held that frustrating job for three decades, inheriting it from his late father who had suffered with it before him. Dr. Choksi insisted on my being re-immunized for some of the numerous diseases the international rules required immunization for for visitors to India and which Robin and I had undergone before leaving the States. He said that American vaccines weren't strong enough for the Indian germs. So I allowed myself to be pumped full of stuff, to no ill effect. He also took me around on visits to the municipal hospital, a depressing gray place full of patients accompanied by family members who along with doing much of their nursing, prepared the patients' meals at the bedsides. The maternity ward was a special shock to me — the average birth weight was five pounds. Indians are not genetically tiny people. Then one day when I made my call on him, I found Dr. Choksi almost in tears: “Mrs. Sanderson, I do not know what to do. As you know we have had an

effective anti-malaria program in Bombay and its suburbs for three years, and during the last year malaria has been substantially eradicated. Now the City Council refuses funds to continue the program. They say malaria has been conquered and the program is therefore no longer needed. Of course next year we shall be right where we started from." Poor Dr. Choksi.

On the bug occasion Dr. Choksi took one look and identified it as a bedbug. A bedbug! I was horrified. I had heard of bedbugs but they were utterly out of my field of vision for myself or anyone I would ever know; they were something suffered by terribly poor and dirty people and by soldiers in filthy war situations. Dr. Choksi said they were common enough in Bombay. They could have come in with the laundry from the dhobi, or from any number of other sources. He would send the extermination squad to my house at my earliest convenience.

The extermination squad duly arrived. After a brief inspection its head man gave his verdict: "Madam, it will do no good to exterminate your flat alone. We must exterminate the whole compound, and we must repeat the extermination regularly." Needless to say I agreed enthusiastically to this prescription, and the place was nicely freed of some hundreds of thousands of small fauna. Followed by a night's blessed sleep in peace.

But I had forgotten something. Our immediate neighbors, who lived in the other flat in the compound building, were Jains. Jains really believe in the sanctity of life. They kill nothing, not even the mosquito which threatens them with malaria.

Sure enough, when I got back from the office next day there was a delegation waiting for me. I had done something terrible: all this killing would be on their karma, they would have to go through endless incarnations as bugs and insects and rats, be punished interminably.

I felt awful. I do not like to fly in the face of other people's beliefs, however strange these may seem to me, and I certainly try to avoid forcing my own beliefs on others. On the

other hand.... on the other hand, the prospect of living in an ocean of tiny creatures doing their best to sting Robin and me and perhaps make us sick, was also too much. I had just moved in, I couldn't face another move and if I could, where would I find a place to move to?

Thank heaven most problems do have solutions. I told my neighbors I was extremely sorry for having thoughtlessly caused them such concern, for though I did not share their beliefs about the sanctity of all kinds of life, I indeed respected it, and them. But need they really worry? They had not called in the extermination squad, nor would they do so in future. This insect holocaust would be on my karma, not on theirs, would it not? Would it not be possible to continue the regular exterminations, but entirely on my responsibility? After each visit of the squad their representatives might register a protest with me, to ensure their innocence.

There ensued a sort of football-huddle in Gujarati. Then an English-speaker turned to me: Agreed. No doubt even Jains don't enjoy being bitten by bedbugs. So, for the rest of our tenancy in that apartment, the extermination squad made regular visits, after each of which a lady of the Jain house made a pro forma protest to me, and all went well.

Since then, when this tale has come into the conversation, I do ask that if, after my death, some poor cockroach or spider or fly approaches my interlocutor with a beseeching expression on its face, please just put it out of its misery as quickly as possible. That will be one down on the millions of bad incarnations I must go through.

Amid all this both Robin and I were having a fine time:

Tuesday night the American Women's Club gave their annual charity ball .... I was in the show... all togged out as an opera singer howling my head off with something from “La Traviata” while clowns played on stage, people played ball, blew whistles, etc. the act went over big!(March 30, 1950)

There was a slight downside to all this:

Among life's little problems in Bombay, there's such a shortage of unattached European women that I get a terrific rush. Which is loads of fun, natch. On the other hand, it creates problems as follows: (1) how to keep social contacts which are really business but which take a social form, from developing into “date” situations, (2) how to placate — or at least avoid — unfavorable criticism of the consulate by the local [American] ladies who have nothing to do but gossip and be envious of people with entr# to circles closed to them, (3) how to placate a nice American boy friend who gets unreasoning ... fits of jealously.(July 20, 1950)

But the downside was slight indeed:

I had a “lazy” day ... women's club this morning, then a lunch with some of the gals, took the afternoon off and slept most of it. Last night I had the first of four big cocktail parties, 30 people, and a surprising success if I do say it myself.(June 28, 1950)

I began that June 28 description of a lazy day, however, with “As you can imagine, things have been somewhat exciting around here lately,” because

I suppose everyone over there is all excited about the Korea thing. Right at the moment, of course, we don't know where it will lead, but I for one think it's a damn good thing we aren't taking this one lying down. It would be much harder to keep the peace and defend ourselves after Russia had gobbled up the entire rest of the world than now. There's still a good chance they'll back down, too, as they did in Greece and Iran, if we clamp down right now. Frankly, I don't think it will be war [between the U.S. and Russia].(Ibid.)

I was at pains to try to convince Mama and Daddy that we were if anything in less danger from Russian bombs in Bombay than they were in Boise. And they weren't the only ones who worried that, especially now that India had recognized Communist China, India would “go communist.” There was a noisy and in some areas influential Communist Party of

India, and a number of splinters from it, notably in Telengana, where however it seemed to me the “Communist” part was mainly a matter of the local communists taking advantage of a richly justified peasants' revolt. I never thought India would “go communist,” or be forced under the monolithic Soviet wing. I had a sneaking private thought that Stalin might well welcome India as the tale has it that he welcomed Bolivia. I was beginning to see that, especially for a country with India's problems, winning its independence was child's play compared to governing it afterward. India was, however, more fortunate than most in that the leaders of its independence movement were also reasonably capable of governing. The two talents rarely come together in the same person or group.

And I can't say my general analysis of certain larger political questions has changed much over the decades, though the specifics and situations changed vastly over time:

I'm not so upset about the Korea business as you seem to be. It sounds a bit strange to hear that MacArthur didn't get what he wanted [use of nuclear weapons] because he belonged to the wrong party. Remember he was put in charge in Japan by order of the President — if the President hadn't wanted him there he wouldn't be there. I am remembering all the clamor to get the boys home ... all the howl against compulsory military training.... Remember I worked in the State Department on the Korea desk, and I'm not the least bit surprised about this thing. The only way it could have been prevented was by our stationing permanently large forces in the Far East. Then, unless we also stationed permanently large forces all over the place, the Communists would simply have struck somewhere else.... It doesn't help much to scream around about free people, spend a lot of money on corrupt governments, and sit back and expect the best to happen. On the other hand, if we are going to maintain the force it takes to keep the world peaceful, and we are the only ones who can do it, we can expect to be as unpopular as Britain used to be, because the policeman is never loved. I for one am not too concerned with popularity. If you want my frank (and confidential) opinion ... we can't prevent [countries' “going Communist”] by trying to bolster governments which are riddled with corruption, or by talking freedom to people who have never been free, don't know what freedom

is, are accustomed to violence, disease, famine, injustice, and death.... The hard and unpleasant fact remains that when people are desperate, and ignorant, the man with the most desperate and violent program... which will promise the drawing of the blood of the exploiting classes, has a big edge over the man who has a saner, but slower-moving program. Our main support in the Far East comes from the “haves” among the local population, who are precisely the people most hated — and sometimes justifiably so — by the vast majority of the “have nots.” (August 27, 1950)

Meanwhile, because they had been favorably impressed with him, I knew it would please the parents that

Yesterday when I came to the office there was a wire from Karachi saying “Have arranged three day stay Bombay beginning tenth. Please wire if convenient, love, Bill Decker”. (August 8, 1950)

Yes, Bill looked as good as ever, and was the same old Bill. He told me he hadn't written because he was so discouraged ... Not only was his departure postponed for about nine months for no compelling reason — and he was the eagerest beaver in the class — but it seems he fell in love with a beautiful and somewhat overprotected daughter of a Woodward and Lothrop official in Washington, who first consented to marry him and then at the last minute changed her mind, saying either he give up these notions about going abroad and take a good job in Papa's store or no marriage. Bill was somewhat low about the whole thing, but is taking it quite philosophically, for him! I reminded him of his classic remark to a sad young man in the class to whom the same thing happened last Fall — “Well, Ed, if she won't go to Jeddah she won't go to bedda.” (August 31, 1950)

A few months later I learned, from Arthur and from several others, that my old friend Arthur Hummel had also fallen in love, but with more luck in his case, for his lady and he were duly and married, and he seemed more than happy when I saw him later in Washington.

My excellent clerks and I had reorganized the visa and passport work to the point where we had quite a bit of extra time. At the same time, Joe Belehrad played the loyal overworked administrator to the hilt. Possibly at the Foreign Service inspector's suggestion and almost certainly at Frances Dailor's,

I have another job — not instead of, but in addition to.... I am to take charge of shipping and seamen's affairs from now on. Now all the other jr. officers have been coming in to congratulate me with left-handed compliments about how they hope I won't have too much difficulty with no woman's job, but I just sweetly reply that I guess I'll have to bear with it — I remember a number of masculine condolences on Why I Wouldn't Get in the Foreign Service, too. This puts me in charge of all the strictly consular functions of the office, which isn't so bad for a neophyte. I think I'll be getting an assistant in August, but till then it will be largely a matter of organization of the work. (June 7, 1950)

I didn't get an assistant during the six months before I was transferred to economic work. What I did get, after a couple months' smooth sailing, was a visiting “efficiency expert” from the Department, who recommended that because the combined job was prima facie too much responsibility for such a junior as I, the Department send a mid-level officer to head up the section, with me as his assistant. When I found this out I went to Tim and blew up. It must have worked, for no such boss appeared, though the section was later again divided among two officers, with a third assigned to Belehrad's former administrative housekeeping.

Shipping and seamen was fun, at least in retrospect. Whenever an American vessel (or a Panamanian or Philippines one; the US consulate took care of their affairs in Bombay as a courtesy) the captain would bring his papers to the office for certification and other formalities, and there were some duties connected with both American and Indian customs. The most interesting part, however, was dealing with seamen and their assorted problems and complaints.

There was the Sunday morning, about 3 a.m., when a constable showed up at my door. An American sailor had been arrested and insisted on seeing the consul. I told the constable I would get in touch with the district chief of police in the morning, and to make the sailor as comfortable as a Bombay jail permitted. My pal the district chief had this story to tell: the guy had been enjoying himself in a local cathouse when he got into a fight and somehow fell or was thrust out of a third-floor window onto the composition roof of a car below. That didn't hurt him but it did the car roof. When apprehended, our hero was dashing stark naked up the street, chased by several score of angry neighborhood inhabitants. The administrative judge in charge of the case, a fairly puritanical type, wanted to sentence him to two years, thus making an example so that his fellow-countrymen would behave themselves better in his port.

Two days in a Bombay jail was a fine lesson, and would serve as a horrible example of the results such carryings-on could be expected to have. Two years would very likely kill any American, not to mention the hullabaloo (Michael Fay wasn't the first such “victim”). So on Monday I got together with the judge, said I fully agreed that what the man had done was heinous both to property and to propriety, pointed out to him that his keep in jail for two years would cost the municipality something, and suggested that he be required to pay a substantial fine and compensate the car's owner, and be released on my recognizance and his ship captain's undertaking that he would not be permitted ashore in any other Indian port. Agreed, after some considerable palaver. So he was released into the captain's custody.

He did however have the right to see the consul. On the following morning I heard a scurrying as of people getting out of the way in the outer office: “I'm gonna get that consul and make the biggest grease spot in hell out of him. Leaving me in that place for two days!” My door was shoved open. “I wanna see the consul!”

“Yes?”

“I said I wanna see the consul, God dammit!”

“I am the consul.”

Oh. What would such a fellow do when confronted with a lady, and one who must be aware of his recent history? Today he might well just make that grease spot. But those were gentler times. He muttered and mumbled around, finally said he wanted to tell me he was sorry for my trouble over him.

“Thank you, but that is just my job. But I'm afraid if anyone else gets in the same trouble here, I won't be able to head off a two-year sentence.”

I had no more trouble of that particular kind. Some of the Panamanian vessels were magnificent, those of the Isbrandtsen line, for example. Sparkling, in excellent condition, beautifully run by well paid and courteous officers and crews. It was on those ships that Robin and I regularly feasted, and whence our Thanksgiving turkeys came, and that I decided would be an ideal berth in which for us to go home when leave time came.

But some of the others were filthy unspeakable old tubs, questionably seaworthy and manned by the dregs of the Eurasian shoreline. One day I heard another disturbance in the outer office. I went out, to find my two women clerks as well as the several men huddled in a corner, and thirteen fierce looking characters, some brandishing knives, shouting and imprecating in what seemed like several languages, none even faintly comprehensible to any of us, except that I caught a few words that sounded vaguely like my old Freshman Italian. It was Portuguese. Their speaker managed to convey to me that they were the crew of a Greek ship under Panamanian registry, come to complain of the inhuman conditions under which they had to work and the terrible food and other accommodations provided them, and demand redress and more pay. For starters they wanted “flavoring either spiritual or soft,” in addition to the water they had for drinking

during work in the engine room, where the heat, they said, made the body demand more than just liquid. No, none of them understood English.

This was a bit more than I could handle with no help. I sent the girls into my own office and asked the angry sailors to wait while I called the Portuguese consul, who was a bachelor and a friend of mine. He suggested I send them over to his office. I arranged with him that they should come in the afternoon, after I had had a chance to check on the ship's condition and amenities and on the relevant regulations. I went back out, pointed to the clock: “Three o'clock”, made a drawing showing three o'clock; “Portuguese consul,” showed the Portuguese-speaker how to get there by pointing out the window, and watched them leave.

Three o'clock and, lo and behold, here were thirteen furious sailors again ruffling the calm outside my door. I went out. “Portuguese consul!” “NO!! No Portuguese! American!” “You go Portuguese consul or I call police!”

Again the girls got herded into my office. This time, before I could call the police, I had to call downstairs and get permission to do so. Tim was out of town, our then second-in-command no model of courage. I briefed him on what had been going on, asked if I had his permission to get the local police in on it. “Oh,” he said, “but let me know first if it looks like trouble.”

“That, Les, is what I am doing now!” and hung up.

Just then one of the male clerks dashed in. “Mrs. Sanderson, they have gone!” I went down to report all clear. The exec was ready — half into the well of the CG's desk. The sailors never visited to the Portuguese consulate.

I already had a contingent of the police along one Sunday morning when I went aboard one of these floating (one hoped) disgraces in response to a call to quell a disturbance. It was the high monsoon. I was soaked to the skin, even wearing my bright red-hooded rain

cape. We got aboard. The fracas was in the mess room. I could hear shouts and grunts and groans and the crashing of furniture and the shattering of glass. But when Little Red Riding Hood materialized at the door everything STOPPED — for just long enough for the police to take over the situation.

The other day the Women's Club got terribly sentimental about our poor boys who get hospitalized off ships, and took the Consul General to task for sending them to a local hospital, which of course isn't any great shakes when it comes to comfort. After explaining that hospitalization was up to the shipping companies and they are required by law only to accommodate them in rather plain style, and that the Consulate has no funds for maintaining them in more luxurious surroundings, the CG said anything the Women's Club felt like contributing would of course be welcomed by our boys. So they thought of reserving a nice private room at the local luxury hospital — the one all of us go to. The CG had to put his foot down on that, however, in view of the fact that Bombay would rapidly become the mecca of every beach combing American in the Eastern hemisphere. As it stands, I am to inform the ladies when hospitalization or destitution cases occur, and escort them to visit and take small gifts if they like.... I don't think this will last long, however, as about ninety percent of the hospitalizations are in either for VD or as a result of brawls, usually in what are euphemistically known as “houses of ill repute”, and the girls will no doubt soon tire of being Grey Ladies! (this is for your amusement only!) (July 6, 1950).

Belehrad had by no means subsided. I had of course breathed no word of my concerns over Robin, for the reasons noted above.

This shipping has been something of a headache. The fellow who has been doing it for the last two years has done a lousy job for my money, but the boss thinks he's wonderful — mostly on other counts. I of course try to do as little as possible to give the boss the idea that maybe I don't think so. Anyway, he's also one of these characters who makes a great show about how overworked he is — spends most of his time doing that, if you ask

me — and then refuses to give up a job. Under these circumstances you can imagine I've had one h—l of a time. But it's easing up now. At first I found it almost impossible to get hold of files, instructions, information or anything else; was simply told it was all routine and I needn't worry about anything but signing my name to papers. This I dislike doing — too easy for someone to pass you a Mickey and I wouldn't put it past this character as he's done it to others in the past. The whole office hates him like poison. Then, a month after I'd taken over, I find he's still handing cases and not telling me about it — “In case you might make a mistake.” At this point I blew up, at least blew up inside. I talked it over with the boss, using the tack that I know how hard it is to give over an old job to a new person, but there is only one way to learn, etc., and after all, the technical side of shipping is child's play compared to visas and citizenship and everyone knows it. This was about three weeks ago. I took an awful risk, but came out of it the only person in the office who approached the boss about something involving this guy who didn't get a meat cleaver in the head, so to speak. I think my work record was in my favor, maybe. Things have improved considerably since then. I also found he didn't know any of the local officials and people we deal with on these matters — had either neglected it completely or left it up to the [Indian] clerks — we didn't even have the right names or addresses in a lot of cases. So I went around, made about twenty calls, which seemed to surprise and flatter them all no end, so now we're getting cooperation all over the place and things are running beautifully..... Before I came out the head of the shipping section [at the State Department] wrote the CG suggesting I be put on shipping, which is really unusual because they don't generally want women in this particular job. I was also privately told that they wished to God someone would take over here.... So when, after six months, the job was dumped in my lap, without my connivance, I expected a reaction, and got it. A lot of this — the boss's apparent lack of interest in the thing and so forth — can be explained by the fact that the consular side of FS work is generally regarded as routine, dull, boring, unglamorous and fit only for new recruits.... But no one can say it's not important, because in my opinion you can spend a lot of time trying to make friends for the US but you lose a lot more if you mess up one visa and the guy gets held on Ellis Island; if you let one real subversive

in the States, or welcome a guy with a forged passport as a real American, you not only do a big disservice to your country but you will get your neck in a nice tight noose when discovered.... No one ever hears about a good job if a shipping officer does it, but plenty of union people and shipowners will raise hell if you really do a bad job. Besides, in this job I have constant, unremitting and often exhausting contact with all kinds of people, always wanting something, often wanting the impossible. It is wonderful training in diplomacy if you ask me....

On the other hand, shipping is one part of consular work that has its points, other than those I've mentioned. If you want to and don't care too much about local customs regulations and the reputation of our outfit, you can very neatly practically feed, clothe (male), and provision yourself with things like cigarettes and liquor, free of charge. I think it's one thing to ask for something and offer to pay for it if you are really desperate (like last week when we were out of sugar and I got a birthday cake!), but it can be carried a long, long way. Ergo why some people particularly like the job. I might add here that I can at least say that this jerk isn't in our career service; he's “staff” — which means someone who got in by the back door.... I probably shouldn't write you about this, because you won't be interested and it isn't discreet, but you can understand I can't talk it out with anyone here (though I certainly hear a lot — both in and out of the office!), and it's good to get these things off your chest. I suppose you must know it isn't all moonlight and roses out here, but I can't think of anything else I'd rather do .... One of the fine points is assiduous practice of maintaining cordial relations with one and all no matter how skunkish they are! or at least making the other guy take the first thrust in open warfare. (August 8, 1950)

I had no further trouble with Belehrad thereafter. Not so my successor, Dave Ernst, a decent chap who was on his first post and was given the shipping job when I moved to the economic desk in December 1950. I offered to lend him a hand should he feel the need for it any time during the shakedown-cruise part of the job. So, very quietly, did Belehrad, adding that it was a great relief at last to have someone there who unlike me could do the job, and warning Dave not to mention that he, Belehrad, was volunteering help. Before

the poor guy had a chance to get his feet on the ground, there was a murder on one of the ships. Being uncertain of how to handle it and being a normal male, Dave called on another male, Belehrad, for help. What a mess that one turned out to be! I was defending poor Dave to Tim before it was over, still not fingering Belehrad however. Then this in a personal letter from Frances Dailor:

.... what gives on the shipping desk? We have a report on the USNS Tomahawk that just came in showing that Ernst boarded the ship, followed by Belehrad (apparently on an independent mission) and then Small got in on it. All sounds quite confused. What's the lowdown and is there anything I can do? (Dailor to Sanderson, January 22, 1951)

.... I can't add much to what was between the lines on the report itself. Dave nearly went crazy with it.... [he] has a very good head on his shoulders and despite his newness to the job I think he can handle it and could handle it then. However, half the others in the place got in on it and the last we heard (whether our activities have any bearing on this part I don't know), [the ship] had run aground somewhere. I really know little about it except what Dave told me, but I do know he had the same trouble I had, and may still have some of the same ahead. I had hoped that he, being a man, wouldn't have to put up with it but apparently it's just as bad for him. This is of course a tale out of school, although both Dave and our exec. asked me to tell you what I know about it all. I myself feel that now Childs is here the situation may ease up, as he seems to be a believer in each person doing his own job. He hadn't come yet when the “Tomahawk” was here. (Sanderson to Dailor, February 15, 1951)

As this exchange indicates, we were seeing some new faces — and more of them. Of Prescott Childs and George Small more later. Of Belehrad just one postscript:

1950-51 was the height of the uproar in Washington about homosexuals in government, especially in the State Department and the Foreign Service. At about the same time as the Dailor-Sanderson letters we were visited by another emissary from the Department, a nice

gray-haired senior officer who, when he came to my office for a one-on-one chat about what all knew he was there for, brought up the subject roundabout and with considerable equivocation. Eventually, and with embarrassment, he came out with it: did I know anything about the truth of the rumors that had gotten back to the Department, that there were two “men of, er, irregular morals” on the Bombay staff?

I truthfully said I knew nothing about either of them in that respect, and about one of them (a USIS officer) I had no basis for any kind of judgment. But then I told him why I had so precipitously moved from one apartment to another that was not, really, all that much more desirable per se. I was careful to repeat that I knew nothing, that I had moved because as the mother of a little boy I felt I could take no chances. Very shortly afterward Belehrad was transferred back to the United States and was not heard of or from again. I am convinced he should have been fired. He was a bad guy. He did a disgracefully poor job and displayed disgraceful ethics. I hope, though I am almost sure it is a forlorn hope, that the main, or even only, reason for his departure was not the homosexual part, and especially that it was not my at last 'fessing up' to the investigator.

By that time the Tims were being transferred to Delhi. Tim had gone there to arrange for the family's move when Julie invited herself to my place for a drink and a t#te-a-t#te one evening. I had somehow been expecting the conversation that ensued. Julie and I were close and real friends and Tim knew it. The conversation came round to Why Oh Why, Corey, Didn't You Go To Tim About Belehrad? I said I had gone to him, about the only thing I could prove and that had to do with the job, namely, Belehrad's interference in shipping after it had been put under my responsibility. As to the rest, I heard rumors and more of them as time went on, I heard goings-on above when we lived below him, and I had gotten Robin the hell out of the guy's way and into another apartment in another neighborhood. But how could I be expected to tell all this to Tim, when I had absolutely no proof, and when all well knew that Belehrad was Tim's “white-haired boy,” that everyone else who had tried to tell Tim anything about Belehrad had been slapped down peremptorily and I had no reason to think I had carte blanche to be the exception.

I said that Tim was a fine officer (which I believed) and this didn't reflect on him, really (which I didn't). Tim was indeed a fine officer and a good boss; he did suffer from a bit of overconfidence about his judgments, always very quickly arrived at. In this case, as it developed, Tim seemed to think my not having brought the whole Belehrad affair to him at the beginning constituted some kind of disloyalty. You can't win them all. And as this was only the first of several cases of the “White -haired Boy” syndrome I have encountered, so it was only the first experience of a uniform reaction to the disillusion when it comes: denial to oneself that one had become more than a mentor and to an extent a tool, and refusal to hold oneself responsible for any of the consequences.

[Robin] is going through a rather “clownish” stage ... walks around in a sort of cakewalk, whistling through his teeth, generally acting like a cross between Bob Hope and Red Skelton!..... [but] isn't all clown — you would be very gratified to see how much the gentleman he has become, saying “How Do You Do” and so forth with really amazing savoir faire. He needs it — we've had Sen. and Mrs. Pepper, Marquis Childs, and several other notables passing through here lately, and many of them drop in for tea or something so he meets them.... Dr. Ambedkar, the famous “untouchable” Law Minister in the Nehru cabinet, had tea at our house the other day with Mrs. Ambedkar along. So a few manners are very handy things for Robin to have.

[We] are going to ... Aurangabad... which is near some very famous ancient Hindu temple caves.... He and “Uncle Check,” who's going to do the driving, have been gazing at road maps and so forth for days.... Our agricultural officer, a nice grandfatherly sort, is going along to get a look at some of the local farm areas and methods.... I have to visit a number of my missionary constituents in the area, so I guess this is an example of mixing business and pleasure. (October 11, 1950)

.... all four had a wonderful time, especially Robin. The countryside is lovely this time of year, but you should see the roads! The best ones are like the old hard-surfaced un-oiled two lane affairs in Idaho. Most of them aren't that good — just dirt roads, one lane, and

since most of the traffic is in bullock carts, there are always two well defined ruts.... One of the main problems is cows — you never saw so many cows and water buffaloes in your life as there are on the roads of India, and they all decide to mosey across the road just as the car gets up to them. Of course if you hit one of it's almost worse than hitting a person. Also a common sight is long lines of people, usually women, with great loads of things on their heads, walking single file along the road, with a baby on the hip and another by the hand. The country is fairly high and hilly — looks a little like some parts of Idaho and Montana, except that the trees are not evergreen, but tropical. The ghats (mountains), are beautiful, almost like the Kooskia-Lolo area but not so high.... The villages are just huddles of adobe huts.

When we arrived at Aurangabad, we found that a local movie company had taken over the hotel. So we stayed at an Indian hotel, which was nice and clean although it took us a while to get used to the lack of plumbing! ... the Ajanta caves ... [are] really a sight. Most of the mountains around there have a large solid stone scarp at the bottom — well, in the old days the people used to carve their temples and monasteries right out of the stone, making huge caves. There are over twenty like this at Ajanta and almost a hundred at Ellora. At Ajanta, which was built between about 200 BC and 700 AD, the caves are Buddhist. There is some carving and sculpture, but mostly fresco painting, and it is really magnificent....[at Ellora], besides the caves, there is one huge Hindu temple, all cut out of the rock. The sculpture at Ellora is marvelous, but the constant repetition and the peculiar writhey forms of Hindu sculpture, especially when you see so much of it in one place, is rather frightening to me....

The high point for Robin came on the morning of the day we went to Ellora, when we went to Daulatabad... a hill 600 feet high, with a 100-foot solid rock scarp around the circular bottom.... used as a fortress from about 700 AD until about 1700, and is about the most formidable thing in its line I have ever seen. There are three rows of outer walls and fortifications, the outermost being 2# miles around, and the present town is inside these, although the walls are in ruins now.... people are still living in the remains

of old buildings.... Then there is a big gate, and a 100-foot moat with the only entrance a drawbridge. On the hill itself there are three more rows of fortifications, with some huge guns still mounted where they were in 17th century. The only known entrance is a sort of spiral staircase cut out of the solid rock, and having a regular labyrinth of secret passages, false passages, places for defending soldiers to hide and spring out at an attacker, places where hot oil and rocks and things could be thrown down from above, etc. I'll bet that place was the envy of all the kings in India in its day! Robin was simply thrilled to death with it (he's been reading King Arthur and is very much interested in knights and castles and such). About three-fourths of the way up is a small palace, and on the very top another gun tower. There is a spring high up on the hill — I'll bet they could hold out for years in that place in the old days.... Robin has been picking out likely hills for fortresses ever since! (October 18, 1950)

Very shortly later Norton Ginsburg stopped by for a few days en route to the Far East. This occasioned more parties and another trip up-country; I have a small snapshot titled “Robin and Uncle Norton at Poona.” All seemed well, his letters indicated a fine time and fruitful research. But early in June 1951 I got an anguished wire from him from Singapore. His passport had been taken by the US Consul there and amended “valid only for direct and immediate travel to the US.” No explanation given, but many questions “about my security status. whether I had had troubles in the past, etc. etc.... The implications of the whole affair are sinister and shocking.”(Letter from Norton, June 4, 1951). Norton returned to Washington as directed. He never did get a full explanation, though the whole matter was dropped and he “cleared” eventually. Meanwhile he had lost two excellent potential jobs.

All Norton's friends, including myself and some who had more commanding positions in the corridors of power, took up his case. I wrote the authorities, and got my Consul General, Prescott Childs, to do so as well. To its credit, UC stood by its young faculty member, and Norton remained there until his retirement. Now the geography department

has been eliminated. A pity in this day when college juniors screaming about the evils of the Serbs in Bosnia place Bosnia somewhere in mid-Africa on outline maps.

From the beginning of the tour of duty in Bombay I had been much in demand for press interviews and to give speeches to civic groups and so on; this also because of my being a woman. The early interviews were nothing much, fluff about bringing feminine charm to diplomacy and so on. I have never been fond of public speaking, but my consuls general wanted me to do it. I remember ones about women's position in this-and-that, at one of which the chairman closed his introduction with, “And Mrs. Sanderson says there has never been a cocktail party in her family home!” That is when I lost all credibility with that audience, teetotalers who like most Indians who thought about Americans at all or knew what they were, thought that unless Americans were missionaries they wallowed in alcohol and other debauchery. Then there was the speech commemorating the anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, in which I commented that Americans regarded the U.N. as one of man' great and most hopeful experiments on the road to world peace. Sure enough, the headline next day: “U.S. Regards U.N. as Experiment.” But on the whole these P.R. jobs were successful enough. I am not sure, though, that I convinced the earnest young student who insisted on knowing the condition of the American “peasants” in the part of the U.S.A. I came from. I replied that about the only people who might qualify as peasants were the sharecroppers in the south; in my part of the country farmers owned their land. They often hired help in busy seasons, but these people were employees, not bound to the land or by anything else except the terms of their employment. I could see disbelief in my audience's eyes. A land without peasants? Impossible!

When reports reached Bombay in late October or early November 1951 of some sort of brouhaha in Nepal, John Hlavacek (”Check”) went off to investigate. Nepal had been recognized as an independent state several years before, but still was a bit of a hermit among nations, and its border with India was closed at the time. Check ventured a bit too close to that border and found himself a prisoner of some Nepali soldiers. He then entered Nepal, escorted by his captors, by the odd little funicular that was the main mode of doing

so. While there he managed to make himself persona grata, and came out with a great deal of interesting material, some of which he put on the press wires and the rest, which was of greater political interest but not of the sort that would grab the American newspaper reader, he turned over to me and from which I was to make a highly commended report to the Department (classified, of course, though Check himself, the source, was free to tell whomever he pleased; ironically, I couldn't show him the report when it was finished). He also brought me the leather-sheathed Gurkha knife that hangs on my wall. Very useful for hacking cane and heads, and notched so that if blood should be drawn otherwise while it was unsheathed the owner could prick his thumb and therefore satisfy ancient cultic ritual.

Check had one further tidbit. Now, six months into the Korean conflict, he had some evidence that carbon black, an essential in the manufacture of tires for trucks and military vehicles and one of the numerous items interdicted by the U.S. for export to the Communist world, was being imported into Calcutta, then transshipped to North Korea. I passed this along through Tim to the Embassy. Neither the Embassy nor the Calcutta consulate had any information, nor were they interested. I was upset, and so was Tim. He leading, we rather built a fire under the contented denizens of our other establishments. I don't remember how it all came out, but no more carbon black was so transshipped, if any had been in the first place.

Meanwhile, worrisome things were happening at home. Since early on I had hoped Mama and Daddy could visit us, sent them all sorts of advice about the best season for it (winter) and the best and safest way for a person in Daddy's state of health to travel (a good passenger ship). But:

Please cable any adverse change Daddy's condition letter follows love Bettrobin (cable to Mama, September 5, 1950)I'm so glad Daddy is better. I haven't told Robin about his granddad's illness at all, as I didn't want to worry him. Let me know when Daddy gets home and how everything is going. I do worry so about pneumonia. (September 13, 1950).

Thanksgiving was to be at our place, with Robin and me hosting all the Timberlakes, Check, and some other lone Americans, to a total of sixteen, for a true American feast. The captain of one of those magnificent Isbrandtsen ships had insisted on loading me up with a beautiful big turkey, several tins of cranberry sauce, and some pumpkin and mince pies and trimmings. What matter that the buffalo cream for the pie would be pale grey? I proudly bore the turkey home and called a conference with Antonio. His one question: “How cooking, Memsahib?” “In the oven of course.” “No oven, Memsahib.”

I went out to the kitchen, where I must confess I had probably not set foot since I had had it cleaned up before we moved in. Sure enough, no oven. A two-burner kerosene hotplate only.

“But Antonio, how cooking pies and pastries for us with no oven?”

“Cooking in Miss Darke's oven, Memsahib.” Only then did I realize that all those nice things had been baked in Martha's “oven,” which today we would call a toaster-oven.

So off to the market to buy two enormous round pots. That was the day before Thanksgiving. That evening came the wire that told me the visit with Daddy was not to be. Daddy was gone. My feelings were a mixture of grief, guilt, and indecision. The natural grief of a child who loses a loved parent, exacerbated by guilt at having been less good and less close to him that his love for me warranted, and at having taken Robin so far way from him during that last precious year of his life. Indecision as to what, or rather when, to tell Robin. Should I tell him now? I was certainly in no mood for Thanksgiving festivities, and I knew he would not be either, when he knew. But he had so looked forward to Thanksgiving. And what about all the others? At this point to give them a grey day instead of a holiday? Would it be decent to put my own feelings first in that way?

I decided to say nothing until the day after Thanksgiving. I would simply steel myself not to mention or hint of it, and not to show how I was feeling inside.We stuffed the turkey

and browned it in one of my newly-acquired pots, then covered it with the other one and steamed it (or I supposed the proper world is braised, though we used as little liquid as possible). It wasn't half bad. Antonio outdid himself with all the rest.

I must have done a fair job at concealing my emotions, because a wonderful time seemed to be had by all. Tim showed his true talents at their best when, to meet the requests of the four young fry at table, he carved four drumsticks from one turkey. He did it of course by using the thighs as well, and cutting off the skin areas. On such a huge bird that would have been necessary anyway.

Next day, when I did tell Robin the sad news about his grandpa, his response was, “Well, I know he went straight to heaven.” He had previously told a little friend of his that his Granddad was a saint. “I am going to encourage Robin to look to the spirit of his grandfather for help and guidance in becoming a real man, as a man should be. Maybe that's what being a saint really is.”(November 23, 1950)

His grandfather was of course a Christian saint. But Robin's heaven was well supplied. He had not only Baby Jesus and His mother and God and several saints, but Baby Lord Krishna and a dozen other Hindu figures, including the charmers Ganesh and Hanuman, and for all I know or remember Baby Mohammed as well. Safety in numbers, I have always felt.

His school, however, being run by a bunch of charming Portuguese Jesuits, Robin duly took First Communion on December 1, 1950. There is a snapshot of him and his little colleagues on that happy day, Robin almost staggering under the monster candle Rafael and Antonio made him for the occasion.

In that month I was transferred to the economic/commercial section. In a way I was sorry to leave consular work. I had enjoyed it, and in retrospect that was the best year I

had, professionally, and the most fun, in the Foreign Service. But it was no way to real advancement.

I've been trying to get the new job under my belt, and it isn't so difficult. Unfortunately, my staff in this section can't compare with the ones in the old section, and I spend half my time redrafting their stuff and so forth. They are all on high pay, for alien staff, too, and even though they're not too good it would probably be impossible to get new ones as good as they are. So I just have to work it out as best I can. The commercial and economic work is fascinating, though. (January 22, 1951)

Economic work at the consulate involved not only keeping abreast and reporting on developments of economic interest to the U.S. within the consular district, but also of forwarding to the Department of Commerce information about possible trade opportunities, trying to help American businessmen establish trade relations with Indian opposite numbers or resolve trade problems arising from them, and association with other countries' trade commissioners in the district.

My academic training in economics helped me get a grasp on part of this work, and the year's intensive informal training in diplomacy that visa, passport and shipping work had given me, was enormously helpful. But I knew nothing about business as such, and had only the faintest notion of finance. So it was back to the old grind of learn something new from the beginning. As usual I found this most interesting. This time the learning came not so much through books as through perusing our files and listening to opposite numbers and businessmen, learning the lingo, so to speak.

One of the immediate lessons had to do with the great difference of approach followed by Americans and Indians. An American would breeze into my office of a Monday morning, fresh and full of beans after a two- or three-day plane trip and a good night's sleep in the Taj Mahal Hotel. He planned to see this one and that one and the other one today, then sew up the deals, get the contracts in order and be on his way Friday afternoon.

Great. After one or two such experiences I would suggest he might want to consider that a more flexible schedule might be necessary, for deals, and especially finalizing them with business opposite numbers and going through the Indian bureaucracy — and very few such deals were exempt from this latter — might take more time than he had scheduled. (These, by the way, were almost all trade deals, and relatively minor. Any significant private American investment in India — and it was exiguous then — went through the Embassy). The usual response was, well, in business we don't take our time quite the way you people in government do.

Say all this took place on a Monday. By about Thursday in he would come again, this time somewhat ruffled. These people didn't seem to operate the way businessmen operate. They weren't really ready to deliver. And why did they have to go through such conniptions with foreign exchange authorities and import control regulations and God knows what other governmental stumbling blocks?

By two weeks later the vein would be popping in the poor man's forehead. I never had a real heart attack case on my hands, but I felt it close a couple of times. Sometimes the deals did in the end go through, thereupon often giving rise to more of the numerous trade disputes that filled our file cabinets.

On the other hand, there were Clarence Hulford and Andrew Price, two officers of the National Bank of Commerce of Seattle, who had business in Bombay and made a courtesy call on me at the consulate. Intelligent, agreeable, knowing their work thoroughly, and flexible — they conducted their business in India without noticeable hassle. I saw them several times and may have included them in a couple of social events or visits to the Willingdon Club. They planned to go on to Indonesia next. Since I was interested in Indonesia as a possible next post, I asked them to let me know their general opinion of the place and its desirability or otherwise as a post for Robin and me. Not many weeks later there arrived a four-page letter, in style and content worthy of the best kind of reporting,

in which they gave me their considered opinion that for the time being at least Indonesia might well not be the exact best spot. I have always been grateful to these men.

For their part, Indians — businessmen and others — seemed to have a sort of cloud-cuckooland idea of American business and industry, all of which they tended to lump together under the rubric “Wall Street.” They seemed to picture American industrialists — “Wall Street” — literally as the huge-paunched men wearing gold watch chains and silk top hats so often caricatured. I remember more than one conversation under the orchids that festooned the loggias of the Willingdon Club, in which I was at pains to explain that to an American businessman, “investment” meant putting capital into plant and equipment, hiring workers who would very likely have strong unions to protect their interest, sticking with the business for years and with much hard work, luck and good management watching their fortunes grow. It seemed to me, after visiting a number of other textile and other factories where dust and filth prevailed and machinery bore dates like 1883, that with some notable exceptions the Indian entrepreneur's idea of enterprise was to buy a crumbling enterprise, hire the cheapest possible workers (and they came cheap indeed) and work them and the machinery as hard as possible, do nothing to improve either plant or equipment or human skills, and a year or so later turn the whole over for a hundred-per-cent profit.

Well, I was sort of right. But later experience indicated I had idealized American business practice in my depictions of it. If anything, the reality I idealized has deteriorated since then. And quite possibly Indian practice has made progress in the opposite — i.e., productive — direction.

Shortly after I took over the section I acquired an assistant. The Foreign Service was expanding, and we along with the rest. Harry Barnes was a fresh-cheeked young man, good looking in a nice wholesome blond way, on his first Foreign Service posting. He was bright and pleasant and fun to work with, although as I recall, with two of us on board we certainly weren't overworked.

Among the most pleasant of the economic officer's duties was to represent the United States at meetings of the local trade commissioners —our opposite numbers from other countries. These meetings usually took the form of a monthly luncheon hosted by one of us, and would be held at the Taj Mahal hotel unless the lucky host had a house large enough and well enough appointed to accommodate twenty-four for luncheon. There we settled any business of mutual interest; this was usually a quick and easy job. Then settled in to a good social luncheon. I was of course the only female member of the group. I do remember one puckish host who placed me at one end of a long table, with the Bulgarian on my right and the Czech on my left. We not only had only about twenty words of common language, counting such English, German, and French as we together commanded, but they were obviously terrified, as if they were sitting next to a twenty years' sentence in Siberia. Such was the Cold War in its early phases.

Then came the British Trade Commissioner's turn to play host. Now I should say that on the whole the upper-class Brits I met were delightful people, and I had some good friends among them. But every so often all but the best of them would begin to feel the sting of Not Being Top Country Any More. Then out came the needles, and I am sorry to say many of my American colleagues did not know how to handle being needled. They got angry and red-faced. They weren't equipped to respond in kind. Possibly, as my Foreign Service oral examination and some other episodes many illustrate, I had more experience with being needled, patronized, and generally put down, than my male colleagues, and was used to it and ready for it. I have always hated teasing, but this wasn't exactly teasing, it was very delicately inserting the knife in the tenderest spot — and as far as I was concerned, even on the receiving end (I certainly didn't dish any of it out) it was business, not private. One Brit remarked to Mama that if all the Americans were like me everything would go beautifully, always. Was he just flattering her through me? was he implying high gullibility on my part? I have often wondered.

At any rate, came the Brit's turn to play host. All had been set up and secretaries notified of time and place and so on, when, an hour or so before the luncheon was to take place, he telephoned me. He was awfully sorry, Mrs. Sanderson, but he had scheduled the luncheon at his club — the only really suitable place, you know — and unfortunately the club did not admit ladies except on specified occasions of which this was not one. Would someone else from the consulate perhaps be able to come in my place?

But of course. I would see that we were represented, I said. The phone call over, I called Harry in. Harry would go to the Trade Commissioner's lunch. Not quite in my stead, however. Harry was not authorized to make any comments whatsoever on any substantive matter that might arise during the business session.

Harry was a truly good man. He understood exactly what I was up to, and I think he approved — not all that common a trait in those macho days. He lunched. He kept quiet. And it so happened that (as I had known it would) a question of real significance did for once hit the table. It was a questionthat could not be dealt with without input from the U.S. A frantic call from our host: what to do? I sweetly explained that Harry was a delightful and intelligent chap and a real Foreign Service Officer, but one who had been fledged only very recently and had hardly had a chance to become au courant with the affairs of the trade commissioners. Best, perhaps, they all enjoy their lunch, then convene in my office for discussion of the issue.

Which they did. Twenty-four sweating trade commissioners, in my office, which measured about ten by fourteen feet and boasted two desks, numerous file cabinets and bookshelves, and four chairs: mine, my secretary's, and two for visitors. I should say it was also the stifling hot season just before the monsoon broke — and air conditioning unknown. The issue, by the way, got resolved in record time. And I attended trade commissioners' lunches regularly thereafter, until I was transferred to labor and political reporting.

One of the real pleasures and privileges of my economic work was membership in the Economic Discussion Group, a collection of about twenty businessmen, professionals and academics concerned with economics and business in India. We met monthly, rather formally in a seminar room made available by a local bank or business (I don't remember where it was exactly), a prearranged topic was discussed, with some participants working from notes they had previously prepared. Aside from the theoretical and practical learning this experience gave me — especially in areas where theory and practice meet and react on each other — I very much enjoyed the ladies and gentlemen of this group, whose conversation always left me elated, as if I had drunk and refreshed myself at some rare spring.

January 1951 brought us a new consul general. Prescott Childs was older — perhaps in his mid-fifties — and less obviously active and energetic than Tim Timberlake. He also was obviously not, or no longer, looking for glory as an ambassador. He was happy to do a good and satisfying job as consul general. He had a nice dry humor, and was one of the fairest people I have ever met. He needed all these virtues as time went on in our Bombay shop.

Shortly after they arrived, and before the Timberlakes had left permanently for Delhi, I invited them all to dinner. I also invited Tommy and Dorrie Thompson, an attractive couple, he the head of Pan Am operations for south Asia. What I didn't know — and without asking to I heard a great deal of the gossip in the American community in Bombay — was that for some reason Tommy had offended Tim. Towards dessert Tim exploded, allowed as how he had kept quiet because of his being consul general but now he could let it all hang out — and he did, and swept out with Julie in his wake.

I was amazed, and concerned. Here I was, supposed to be a good hostess and knowing about what went on among the local Americans, and subjecting my new consul general and his wife to this, first crack out of the box! I apologized profusely. Neither of the

Childs seemed to think I was blameable, and Roberta endeared herself forever to me by remarking that it was really very interesting.

Both of them were dears. I loved the Timberlakes but there are virtues to a more measured approach to life, as well. I think the Childs, whose children were grown and gone, looked on me with just a trifle of parental attitude. Roberta and Mama became great friends when Mama came to stay with me later on.

And I made a couple of other bloopers as a hostess. Once I had a small dinner party for a visiting businessman, who proceeded to get thoroughly drunk and over coffee stretched out on the sofa and snored so loud conversation among us others became somewhat strained. Then there was the dinner at the Taj Mahal hotel that Bert Evans, our agricultural officer, whose wife had not yet come out to Bombay, asked me to look after for him. On the seating arrangements I decided to place the senior lady at Bert's right (I knew who was senior because I had renewed all their passports). She also turned out to be a lush, which I hadn't known before. Later on I concluded that if your parties are successful 90% of the time you can't really blame yourself for the utterly unexpected barbarism that some people think it quite all right to perpetrate on hostesses. But you should look for possible trouble as well.

One lovely Prescott Childs story. Some time in 1951 Eleanor Roosevelt visited India, with a two-day stop in Bombay. She was scheduled for a number of speeches, meetings and other events there. Excitement was high in the American community, especially among the ladies. Partisan quibbles all seemed to be forgotten. Several of the prominent ladies, including the wives of some senior consular officers, were vying for the role of on-site assistant and companion to Mrs. Roosevelt.

One day Childs called me into his office. He said he was designating me to be Mrs. Roosevelt's “aide-de-camp” during her visit. I was horrified, and said so. I said all these

wives of senior people were already at each other's throats for the job; they would do their best to make mincemeat of me.

“Don't worry about that,” he said dryly, “I'll see that the word gets around. Let me tell you a story. During the war at some army base in the States the wives' club decided, when the commanding officer was to be transferred, to present a silver tray to Mme. Commanding Officer. So a large luncheon was put on. It so happened that a WAC officer, a lieutenant or captain, was present at this function. When after all sorts of mouthings, they brought out the tray and the mistress of ceremonies announced that it would be presented to the senior-ranking lady present, the WAC got up, went to the head table, firmly took the tray, turned around to the audience and thanked them. As the only woman in the place who had official rank in her own right she was of course senior-ranking. And departed, with tray.

“You are the only American woman here who has official rank. You are obviously the only proper aide-de-camp for Mrs. Roosevelt.”

And ADC I was. An exciting couple of days. The first function was a huge dinner at the Taj Mahal hotel, after which Mrs. Roosevelt would speak to the assembled guests. Unfortunately her plane, which had been due to arrive some hours before the dinner, had not done so by an hour after the dinner was scheduled and the guests assembled. After some discussion it was decided that the dinner should be served while it was still edible, and another prepared for Mrs. R. and her party.

Dessert was being served when in swept Mrs. Roosevelt. She was one of the ugliest and most ill-groomed women I had yet seen in public life. And now, out of consideration for those who had waited so long for her, she limited her freshening up to a rapid face and hand wash and a pass through her hair with her comb. She had not changed from her traveling outfit of ill-fitting cotton twill skirt and blouse, large flat shoes not much polished, and lisle hose that tended to droop at the ankles. She had not dined, but she went to the podium and made her remarks. And when she spoke all the lack of physical beauty, all the

carelessness of dress, became as nothing. She was wonderful. And remained that way. One could not help loving her. It was a great two days for me.

The consulate was growing, fast. Shortly after Prescott and Roberta Childs arrived we got several more officers. George Small was a staff officer, transferred from Johannesburg to take over some of Belehrad's old duties. On learning that he would come on board Check, who had known him in “Jo-Berg,” had remarked to me that George was a nice fellow, but not very bright. An understatement. George was a brash young man whose constant grin was a sort of composite of Bugs Bunny's and Alfred G. Neumann's. And could he mess things up! Rare the shipment that didn't arrive after endless delay on the docks, often showing considerable post-trip damage and occasioning endless bureaucratic wrangling. Rare the consular car that, needing repairs, didn't go to the wrong shop and come back in worse shape than before. George seemed never to get it straight which of his own staff, let alone which Indian and local government offices, were handling which items or kinds of work. The one professional quality with which he was amply endowed was self-confidence; that oozed from every pore. But he was a nice guy, and his own dimness was partially offset by his wife, a plain looking but very pleasant and sensible woman. When after a truly scarifying series of experiences with getting my things and money transferred from Bombay to Athens, I called him “that damned George Small” in a letter to Mama, I suppose I was unkind. He couldn't help being stupid and a fool. But there are limits.

In early February 1951 Check and I made a few days' trip by steamer to Goa, a significant source of manganese ore. My journal notes are a mixture of personal observation and items to be included in reports after my return, and will illustrate the sorts of things I looked for on these expeditions up country. Incidentally, few of the consular or embassy officers thought it necessary to bother with up-country trips except by air to big places like Nagpur or hill stations, or the sites of ancient artistic miracles like the Taj Mahal. My gypsy feet made all these trips a joy, one for which I was in a sort of continuous campaign with the consul general and the Department. I didn't need modern plumbing or familiar food. I saw

so much that no one staying in the big cities would see. And possibly my reports were read by someone in Washington.

Wed. Feb. 7: Was gratified to find myself not seasick — had worried as this is my first sea trip, albeit only coastal. Others aboard: Lawson of Burmah Shell, Mr. and Mrs. Prideau, going to Goa for Killick's, my cabin mate a Mrs. Mouledine, sweet thing but with two small children and an ayah, whose foot I fell over when going to bed thus waking the world. Also Colm and Gabriels, and — everyone else seems to be in manganese. A heavenly day... After dinner had rather desultory conversation with Check, Lawson and the Prideaus, livened up when Check told them about Nepal.

Thurs, 8: [Several officials and others met Check and me and] took us, and Colm and the Gabriels, to the Antigo Palacio hotel in Marmagao. This is said to be the old Governor's Palace, about 400 years old. The hotel is on the top floor — cavernous rooms, baths larger than the rooms but strictly antique (no plumbing).... as long as they fetch bath water energetically it really doesn't make much difference. Above the hotel the ruin of old fortifications — quite a sight. After a rather good breakfast on the hotel verandah (overlooking the Marmagao docks — space for two large ships — 29 foot draft — and three small ones — rather good warehouse facilities I should think ... drove over the Panjim for shopping. Beautiful country — lovelier than I've seen elsewhere in India. Houses adobe, tile, thatch....People not so handsome as further north but look as well off and possibly more contented. Young Russeklal comments apropos this: “they do nothing but pick coconuts off trees, drink country liquor and sleep.” To me this seems at least as satisfying as working liking ants, starving, and being generally miserable in India. Good roads. Must take ferry from Cortalim to Panjim ... a charming and picturesque place, and wonderful to go into shops and find things you want, and shop. A fair lunch at the Imperial Hotel in Panjim. I shouldn't mind at all if the Americans decided they needed a female vice consul here to handle the manganese business! After Panjim, drove to Margao, about 20 miles distant and again across the ferry. More shopping. Margao likewise picturesque but not so much for tourists as Panjim — Kantilals have their offices here. Then back to

Marmagao and a hot bath. How these drivers go like the wind! and the roads are smoother but very winding — people stay on the side of the road here and for good reason. Dinner and early bed.

Friday, 9th: the biggest day. Drove out to Kantilal's mine. About 50 miles each way — almost to the Indian border. Stopped at Sanvordem where the loading takes place. Two hundred people, vast majority women and children, sitting on top of huge pile of manganese ore (about 7000 tons in K's plot there now), working with little hammers, sorting the ore out. Russeklal says they can tell by looking whether it's high grade, low grade, etc., put it tiny piece by piece in little baskets, then it's carted off to the wagons (on the women's heads), loaded, and sent on its way to ship side at Marmagao. For this they are paid women Rs. 1/1 [about $.23], men about Rs. 2/6 [about $.53], per day, 6 days a week. No holidays with pay or other such amenities, but on-job injury compensated (not by law, just a policy of Ks firm). From Sanvordem, which is on the railroad, to the mine, just a track road — how they transport heavy truckloads down it is beyond me. Road owned by govt but maintained by company. Russeklal says their firm mines about 15,000 tons/yr. — half the total for Goa. Others in about 80 different mines, and this where the middle-man business comes in. Ks eliminate a lot of this by being mine owners, operators, and doing their own transport to railhead and arranging onward to ship side. They have a lot of trouble getting sufficient cars, due general shortage and usual squeeze tactics at every point. They were working feverishly at this angle today. The mine itself is amazing. Strip-type, just a hole in the hill, about 200 feet hollow now; 800 people working (approximately same wage and conditions), dig it out with picks, carry on heads to screens, load into trucks and drive off to railroad. Operations carried on 10 months of year, exclude monsoon's worst months. The country has never been surveyed so it is not known how much manganese ore is there or what type, except where working is actually going on. I should imagine many of the hills have workable deposits. Difficulties of setting up large-scale operations in jungle... without tremendous capital outlay obvious. Ks now thinking of eliminating rail transport by shipping stuff down in barges. But no one willing to

put in a real modern operation when boom may be over in a year or two. Laborers live in shacks made of twigs — hope my snap of one shack and its 16 inhabitants comes out.

After running over mines for a couple of hours (I've never been so filthy in my life), had beer and snack in manager's shack and went back. Noticed Goa govt. is putting in fairly extensive irrigation canal system — should double present food output and make Goa about 75% self-sufficient for food (will try to see irrigation people tomorrow). Have been trying to assess various interesting political angles but will leave noting it till later when more info has been gathered. Should add two more points about the mines — labor is recruited from surrounding villages, and as far as I can see is highly efficient in each job as such, but I am also convinced they have no notion whatsoever of what the manganese is, what it is used for, etc. I often got the feeling, “So this is what our steel production lies on.” It can't be much different in Africa or ... in Siberia either. Would seem to me that anyone who said to them, look, follow me and you'll be driving around in big cars and they'll be carrying this dirt around on their heads, could be most successful. I suspect CP is much the same — maybe all “modern” industries in this part of the world, regardless of plant and equipment and so forth, labor itself is ignorant of what it is really doing, it is their rupee a day to keep body and soul more or less together. Two, blasting operations, as an example of method — to get the overcoat of silica off, they bore little holes, plug them with gunpowder repeat gunpowder, set it off. The whole thing is strictly on a shoestring basis. You can't blame the operators, for they can't see expending capital on long-term basis as things stand now, neither could I in their shoes. they lease the land from the govt at very low rates — about Rs. 1000/100 acres per year — govt gets most revenue from export duties and excise.

.... skipped lunch, spent a solid hour washing iron and manganese dust from hair and skin (I'll never get my feet clean) napped, then took a walk with Check up to the fort. It isn't really a fort but a fortifications wall with gun emplacements, etc. Some nice bungalows on top of the hill — magnificent view. Then drinks, dinner and bed.

Colm and Gabriel are having a lot of trouble. I knew the manganese business in India was a mess but never realized quite how much of a mess. They work day and night, and so do all the Kantilals. Main struggle: getting ship space, getting wagons for loading, greasing enough palms, overcoming terrific and dishonest competitors. I can't feel too bad about the last, as they'll all cut each other's throats, but feel that in view essentiality manganese and lack supply in [U.S.], we should now cartelize temporarily and begin calling the tune, instead of having a dozen competitors out here forcing prices up and making business difficult — contracts not worth their paper now, etc. (Kelser, of course, just laughed at me — but surely the companies themselves would get together at only the merest hint). Example: I believe Colm has chartered a ship — Killicks have sneaked 500 tons aboard for a customer of theirs, with the connivance of Colm's company's agents in Marmagao, now the captain of the ship offers to put 500 more aboard for Colm if the palm is greased a bit. Harbor master has been making life difficult for them, insisting ship go out at a certain time, seeing that they don't get cars for loading before that time, etc.

Meanwhile, the countryside is lovely, the weather so beautiful, and I feel wonderfully refreshed. I see the point in holidays — it's not that you get more sleep, it's that the mind doesn't have to work and the usual conflicts aren't there; one gets a rest impossible at home.

Saturday: More shopping in Panjim. I've bought a lot of stuf— several pieces of Indian cotton produced only for export... perfume, toilet water, candy, a few bottles of brandy and liqueurs, can opener, brassieres, sox for Robin, a camera — all the things you can't just go in and buy in Bombay. A lousy lunch at the Imperial, then asked for a room for an hour's rest. How glad I am we're not staying there! Filthy, tiny rooms, people screaming, partitions don't even come up to the ceiling and the “sanitary” ha ha facilities shared by one and all almost regardless of sex. At least where we are is cool and as clean as possible for a place overlooking manganese and iron ore shipments and loading operations, and my mosquito-netted bed is hard but not uncomfortable.

Saw Bailey — not much impressed. He had nothing new to add on his personal troubles. Says radio Goa is actually operating on 300 watts although they say 1000 because no one will buy time from such a tiny station as they really have. Usual gripes about advertisers objecting to paying for program time — the bazaar mentality I gues— as if anyone would listen to a day full of ads. More gripes about slowness (no telephones in Goa — thank God as far as I'm concerned but hard for high pressure business men. Correction: a few local lines, but no inter-city and only in Panjim). Seems they are building a new transmitter, it is strictly a step at a time. Asked us to come around later, maybe get in touch with the irrigation people, but we were too tired. Check went to Heraldo newspaper office. There are 2 Portuguese papers, “Heraldo” and “O Heraldo.” All news gotten from listening to BBC and other radio stations, subscribing to Portuguese new service at Rs. 50 per month. Three Konkani papers. Heraldo, largest, claims 5000 circulation, Check guesses it is really about 2000. All papers censored page by page before publication. Back to Marmagao, cleaned up, went to see Prideaus but they weren't at home, dinner, and bed.

Sunday: A lousy day, mostly waiting around to go aboard. Went aboard at 4, ship supposed to sail at 4:30, finally got under way at 8. My cabin mate, of all people, Lady Rama Rau. She says India must have Goa. It is not suitable for Goa to be foreign. How? By attack if necessary. Check says more effective would be to make conditions in India better than in Goa. “That would take too long.” [Check] pointed out business people, including Hindus, prefer Goa as is because at least possible to do business there. “That doesn't matter.” Interesting, but hardly nonviolent or live and let live (cf. our conversation at my dinner party). Dinner, and bed. I practically fall asleep over coffee these days!

At dinner at my house some weeks before Lady R.R. had given us a homily on Indian nonviolence as contrasted with Western truculence. Well, consistency is a virtue of small minds. Sir Bengal and Lady Rama Rau had become frequent associates of mine. Not intimate friends, but congenial. They were close friends of Nehru; Sir Bengal had some important diplomatic and other positions both under the Raj and after independence,

and Lady Rama Rau had founded and was a moving force in several local and all-India organizations devoted to various aspects of the betterment of the lot of Indian women and of the general welfare. She was my ideal of what I would like to be at 50 or so — classic features (which I would never have of course), perfectly groomed, lovely silver-gray hair, intelligent, excellent conversationalist in a rich contralto. Sir Benegal charming in his less obvious way. They had two daughters. The elder, Premila, was also beautiful, and “very fair,” a prized quality. She was married and had a couple of babies. The younger one, Santha, about my age, was neither beautiful nor fair, but she was very, very bright and articulate. She disliked me on sight, I think; at least she did her best to ignore me and my approaches toward becoming friends. Notwithstanding, or perhaps because of, her Wellesley education, Santha was if anything more critical of the United States and Americans than most. Santha married an American, Faubion Bowers, who was there part of my time in India, and later moved to the United States, where she became a several-times-published author.

While I was gone one of our bachelor friends came to stay with Robin .... Robin loves these “vacations” with his men friends.... This time, when I kissed him goodbye, I said, “It won't be long, sweetie, only five days.” He looked a bit disappointed and said “But Mommy, I thought you were going to be gone for a month!” He's quite happy, though — I brought him candy, stamps, and best of all some samples of manganese and iron ores. He's already been trying to make steel by burning them in a Crisco can. He's reading quite well now, but is slow on spelling. I think other things are much too interesting to keep him very interested in school. (February 13, 1951)

After I got back, I spent getting caught up on personal mail... taking a complete inventory (what an awful job! but pays off for insurance purposes, assessment of repairs necessary, and so forth), and getting my household in some kind of good shape. But tragedy struck: I was so enthusiastic about Goa that Rafael, my head bearer, Robin's best friend, and the mainstay of “Jairaz House,” got homesick, decided he'd have to quit and go back to the rice paddy. He says it's for good, but I think maybe he's just going for a few weeks to

help plant. Everyone's servants depart about this time of the year, and they don't seem to realize that a straight request for leave will get reasonable consideration, so they make up stories about how their father died or they are sick or something, and then show up again in a couple of months. (March 3, 1951)

Unfortunately Rafael didn't show up again. Shiva, his replacement, was older and smoother. He had been in service with British families for forty years. I thought very highly of him. Not a Goan or a Christian, he seemed to get on fairly well with Antonio, and with the lower servants, and served me meticulously.

[He] is so punctilious he almost scares me! Then I got a nice strong young fellow for the heavies, and with the cook, plus the three part-times ones (laundryman, mending ayah, and bathroom sweeper...), and our darling Siamese puss Rani, we make up quite a household. Come along, there's more than room for another! I decided against getting a driver until you come. We will need one then as you will need the car during the day, but I rather enjoy driving, nerve-wracking as it is in Bombay. (June 11, 1951)

From early 1951 on my letters are increasingly taken up with plans for Mama's visit. Over the ensuing months there followed a shower of advice from me on the best ships, what to bring, and all sorts of other things. Plans changed because her arrival was more than once pushed back and in the event she got there only in November. She had followed my suggestions as to what to bring to the letter, and then about doubled them.

Her impending arrival created another housing problem for me. Our apartment was fine for the two of us, but could not comfortably accommodate a third. There followed the usual number of false starts and lost chances, the latter effectively aided and abetted by the incompetence of George Small: “who's in charge of housing and is also a dolt” (April 17, 1951). I was not enthusiastic about living in an apartment in the consulate compound then being built. I preferred if at all possible to live at some comfortable distance from professional colleagues. Finding a new place wasn't easy:

[the] flat I told you about in the last letter went the way of many good things, unfortunately. The Government won't assign it to us, and if they do, a senior officer gets it. ... the senior officers get good places because of their rank, and the clerks get good places because of “democracy.” This leaves the junior officers holding the bag, and we still have to put up a good front for the sake of Uncle Sam's prestige. (April 3, 1951)

But there was a happy ending:

... our new house... is just lovely... has a nice wide central corridor, and a 16x32 foot living-dining room... a veranda about 8 feet wide running the length of the main room.... two bedrooms, each 15x21... I'm having some nice furniture built for [Robin's] room, in sizes he can use both now and later.... why not live like human beings — we'll always be moving around.... each bedroom has a huge bath, and I've fixed mine up for a dressing room [building a large curtained clothes closet along one side, putting a dressing table on another wall]... The apt. house is on a sort of circle, off the main road, so children can play safely and in nice gardens... [it] is leased by Caltex Oil company, and I don't know why they were so nice as to offer me the place when it came vacant! (June 11, 1951)

Not to mention salaries, American firms were much more generous about housing and other amenities than the U.S. government, of course, and Americans earning their keep abroad, other than U.S. Government employees, paid no income tax on the first several tens of thousands of income. The prestige of diplomatic statuswas a great comfort, but did not always seem like a full quid pro quo. Although things were said to be changing, there seemed still to be an assumption that American consuls and diplomats would have private incomes. I wonder if this is still the case.

Despite my lack of private income, the new apartment encouraged me in a great extravagance. I paid a lot of money — two or three hundred dollars — for a beautiful old B#sendorfer grand piano, which had been “tropicalized” and was by far the finest piano I have ever owned or had regular access to. It arrived one fine morning when I happened

to be at home. I suppose I had expected a truck. But looking over the verandah I spied a strange little knot making its way slowly up the main road and into our compound. The knot was composed of twelve or fourteen little men, in close formation, with the piano balanced on their turbaned heads. Once arrived at our building, it was hoisted up by a winch fastened on the roof, majestically rising to our verandah, over its wall, and into the living room. This story has always interested, and I think helped get me good cooperation out of, the many movers I have been in contact with since.

Tropicalized or not, George Small's christening of my prize by pouring a highball onto the strings and sounding board at a party, did not please me.

I loved that piano. It would be worth about $20,000 today. But I sold it on leaving India. I desperately needed the money, and had no assurance that our housing in Greece would accommodate it. I have often regretted not keeping it. On the other hand, would our lives not have been very different and probably less mobile, accompanied by a six-foot B#sendorfer?

Social life went on as usual:

... I spent most of the rest of the vacation golfing (I'm now a member of the Willingdon Club — it's quite an advantage being a lady in this respect, as no one in the office except the Consul general, who gets special privileges, ever seems to be able to wait out the 3 or 4 year waiting list! reading, being lazy, shopping... (March 3, 1951).

The Willingdon Club was a delightful place, established a half century before by farsighted British and Indians to provide a place where they could socialize together. Along with other amenities it boasted a splendid swimming pool, in season festooned with blossoms of the orchid vines that had been trained to go over the water from tree to tree, and a golf course reputed to be the easiest east of Suez (there were no difficult ones), and on which I at least achieved the maximum handicap of 38 — but on nine holes in my case. I never

became a golfer, or good at any sports. The club became a center of Mama's social life, too, when she got to Bombay.

“I've averaged two luncheons and two dinners per week for several weeks — as hostess, that is, not counting when I get to be a guest. I do need you here!” (April 17, 1951).

Consular parties were even more popular than heretofore because, shortly after my arrival in Bombay, Bombay State went “dry,” with alcoholic beverages available only to foreigners and certified “addicts,” and rationed and fearfully expensive for them. People with diplomatic status could import liquor freely, and tax-free it was very cheap. Prohibition caused furor in the press, but most upper-class Indians, even the “Westernized” among them, drank little if at all; it was the hapless peasants who would be pulled in for making toddy, a vile concoction of coconut products, who suffered most. Having seen how badly prohibition worked in the United States — like current drug interdiction it had the effect of if anything increasing consumption, meanwhile providing for the growth of huge criminal operations — I was not in sympathy with prohibition in Bombay. But as a foreign official it was not my place to say that.

I went to a splendid wedding reception at the Saudi Arabian consul's residence, at which, being the only woman present with the other officials and male guests and seeing a good opportunity, I suggested to the consul, quite a friend of mine, that I visit the zenana (ladies' quarters). Here, besides a crowd of female guests, I met about thirty women and girls of the house, two-thirds of them servants. The wives and daughters were uniformly beautiful, and the senior wives enormously fat and their faces perfectly blank. They had sat in that zenana for years, doing nothing for themselves, having no thoughts beyond promotion of their own children's interests. Two or three of the daughters had been tutored in English. They were sweet, but not surprisingly on such new acquaintance I could detect no spark of an idea that their lives might vary from their mothers'. I wonder if longer acquaintance would have revealed such a spark. Somehow I doubt it.

Then a family of Khoja Muslims (followers of the Aga Khan), who lived in a building in our compound invited me to a daytime party. They of course were liberated by Muslim standards, woman and men together at the party. I truly enjoyed myself, except for the effort of making the obligatory pass at tasting a bit of each and every item of food in the twenty-odd courses offered. A task made no easier for me by the very first offering being a delicious but sweet sweet cold almond soup.

I do not remember the scene of the first of several conversations, or confrontations, that young Indian women — Santha probably among them — aggressively thrust upon me about Kathleen Mayo's book Mother India. I had never heard of the book, which was simply not believed. My interlocutors assumed that Mother India was the bedrock of Western views of the country. So I found and read it, and have glanced through it again recently. It is one of those books that, whatever the author's intentions, is inaccurate and bad. Not because of any specific untruth. I can imagine that each and every story in it happened; some of them happen still. But as a whole it presents only one side, the worst side from a Western point of view, of India and Indian life, and thus creates a false picture. An author can find a great deal of bad in any society (admittedly more, perhaps, in the India of the 1920s than in most), and by judging what she sees strictly and only by the standards of her own society, can find it evil.

At a luncheon at Leo Pickles', one of the British High Commissioner's people who often escorted me to official do's, the guest of honor that day was Emily Hahn Boxer. At the time Mrs. Boxer was famous — and notorious — as the lady engineer who, having gone to China to work, had a baby by a Chinese, then took up with Boxer (they married much later), then was interned by the Japanese and gave them such a time that they practically pushed her and the baby aboard the prisoner-exchange ship Gripsholm when it came to Canton to pick up a thousand enemy officials and other foreigners. Her book about all this, China to Me, was a best-seller. She sat there, a large handsome sturdy witty forty-ish lady, holding court while puffing on a huge cigar.

My friend the Portuguese consul also escorted me to some of these gatherings. We got on very well together, on a sort of warm professional basis with no sexual overtones whatsoever. I had long ago learned to appreciate such “just-friends” men, and had a number of them in Bombay, especially a couple of charming Parsis, one of whom subscribed to Punch for me, thus helping me gain some fragile insight into certain aspects of British humor. We would sit around the Club pool, fending off the crows and kites which reveled in snatching sandwiches from plates, even from hands. Then there was Akbar Hydari, the excessively handsome and charming scion of a noble Hyderabadi family. Akbar and I had a favorite custom: the evening after one of us had hosted a dinner or party to which the other had not been invited, the other would visit the host and share leftover goodies and new gossip. Great fun. And on occasion one or another of these friends would ask me to join a group going to see an Indian movie. India then produced film footage second only to that of the United States, most of it pretty bad, much in the local tradition paralleling our soap operas. To me one of the noticeable characteristics was the sheer heft of the female stars. With the exception of Nargis, an exquisite young creature, their beauty seemed to be judged by their poundage. What a contrast to the American film ideal which, notwithstanding the occasional Rita Haworth or Betty Grable, required near-tubercular thinness in its leading ladies. I concluded that people often value that in which they are lacking: in America, where we had so much food that our problem was not getting fat, one should be thin; in India, where the average woman looked like a collection of matchsticks and with reason, evidence of a hearty diet became beautiful. This was confirmed later in Greece where female bosoms, the big (literally) thing with American men, were generous. Greek men didn't see bosoms, they saw Dietrich-like legs, a real rarity among Greek women. Whereas American women often had great legs but less frequently had unnaturally large bosoms on unnaturally slender bodies.

I enjoyed these men in much the same way as I did my women friends. These were a couple of Indian professional women and several American and European wives of local Indians and of American and other foreign businessmen.

There was a constant stream of visitors to Bombay. For example:

... we have two visiting ambassadors this week, [one] the head of Foreign Buildings Operations (who is important because of our terrific housing problems here — but a temperamental old coot!).... We are all in a complete state of confusion, trying to keep everyone entertained and so forth in the manner which they come to expect when they get sufficiently senior — fortunately most of them are pretty nice people. (January 22, 1951)

... the Labor Attach# was coming in from Delhi with his family en route for home leave. Well, [their] boat was over ten days late and they just got off today, along with twelve other consular people.... while he was here I raced around with him, meeting labor people and learning a lot — which I much needed, and trying to entertain his wife and nine-year-old daughter, too. This last was something of a headache. There is a hotel strike here, and although everyone, including the strikers' party, agrees the strike at this stage is practically meaningless and even advised him to go ahead and stay in one of the struck hotels, he won't cross picket lines. Since all the European hotels are on strike, they had to stay at a place where they couldn't get food. And no restaurants to speak of here. So we did our best by them, but as you know some people are awfully fussy, especially doting mothers with only children! But I think it worked out well, although it was something of a strain. (May 4, 1951)

Mama wrote that she thought all this a bit much:

Your advice to let people work things out for themselves, re taking care of themselves when they come to Bombay, really struck a chord with me. It seems half my time, and everyone else's, goes in looking after Visiting Firemen, from Senators on a round-the-world joyride down to the diplomatic couriers. Unfortunately, the bunch that was in my hair for three weeks [lately] were among my superior officers, and I had to try to try to take [one of them — not the labor attach#] around, listen to his nasty cracks about our work here,

amuse his un-amusable wife, and see that they all got fed. I was fed at the end! (June 11, 1951)

[Robin's] school started again last week, and I think he was ready for it after six weeks of hot-weather holiday. They have started a school uniform, all white shorts and shirts (you can imagine what they look like by evening!), and mind you a School Tie. The tailor has practically moved in, what with about a dozen suits for him, several dresses for me ... curtains being remodeled and so forth. (Ibid.)

To my great joy I learned in June that I had been promoted to FSO, Class 5. This promotion came after the minimum time specified in the Foreign Service regulations, and I duly received all sorts of congratulatory letters from training-class mates (some of whom were also promoted) and others. Meanwhile, with the arrival of yet two more officers for the economic section, one fairly senior, I had been transferred in April to political reporting, initially specializing in labor matters. Labor was terra incognita to me. I had to learn about American unions and how they articulated with other interest groups and political parties, as well as the peculiar situation of Indian unions, which contrary to American practice were the creatures of the various political parties. I also had to make and consolidate a whole new set of contacts, many of whom were quite different from any of those I had become acquainted with before. My old associations with Ashok Mehta and with Maniben Kara helped a good deal in this; the consulate had few contacts with local labor groups. As usual I enjoyed all this.

In this position I worked under Clyde Dunn, a Foreign Service Reserve officer who was also executive officer — the number two position — for the consulate. The Dunns had arrived in Bombay in early 1951. Tim Timberlake knew Clyde from earlier, disliked him, and had told me so. When they arrived I found them quite agreeable, especially Marge and the young Dunn daughter. Clyde was smarmy and very obviously, in the parlance of the time, an “operator,” a “stage southerner” as our Labor Attach# from New Delhi later put

it, but I saw no reason, simply on Tim's say-so, to shun the Dunns or to be especially cool to Clyde, who was after all considerably senior to me.

At first we got on quite well after my transfer to his shop. But I soon saw the rationale of Tim's judgment:

I'm getting well into the new job at the office, although it has taken me some months to learn the ropes and so forth. Now the head of the political section (there are only two of us in it), wants me to branch out and not specialize as I have been doing. This is all very well and I'm delighted, but knowing the man, who is a nice person but one of those ambitious people who doesn't care whether his record is one of his own or others' accomplishments, I think it will have to be watched very carefully. For example, he tends to try to steal my contacts and pick my brains, and use the benefits thereof to his own advantage. So I just let him go ahead and think he's doing it, and quietly fight every inch of the way. We get along fine, however, and I think the situation is understood by the right people without my having to say anything. The longer I stay in the Service the more I see it has to be fought on all fronts. There were a couple of terrific battles going on last year, and I was none too happy to be thrown into them, but there was nothing I could do about it. I guess my promotion, and the resignation of a couple of people, show that I was vindicated. Quite a few of the second-raters think they can take advantage of my being female, but they should really know better. (This is between us, by the way). (June 29, 1951).

I was too optimistic. It probably would have done no good to make representations to the consul general. He didn't choose who was sent to Bombay and in any case I think valued peace and quiet rather more than most. But I am not sure the situation was fully understood throughout the rest of my tour of duty there.

I stubbed my toe badly in early June. At that time the United States had undertaken to provide relief for famine victims in parts of Western India, and I was interviewed by a member of the local press about delivery of the shipments. I expressed some concern

that the port's capacity for unloading, of about ten ships per day, might be strained when the relief supplies of grain arrived. Next day all the local papers featured the interview, stating that I had said as many as 30 ships per day would arrive in Bombay. Now this was ridiculous. At 3000 tons average capacity each, thirty ships would carry 180 million pounds of grain — per day. I believe I did ask a rhetorical question: suppose thirteen ships arrived; how long would it take for their unloading and turnaround? But the newspapers all carried the flat statement of 30 ships per day. On seeing the articles I immediately went to see Clyde, mainly to find out what ideas he might have as to how the statement could be corrected without making the reporter lose too much face. But Clyde really carried it along — he assumed, or said to others that he did, that I had in fact made the 30-ships statement. As far as I remember no correction ever appeared. No wonder I became almost neurotically afraid of press interviews.

By August I knew I was in trouble. Here is an extract from a journal note of mine:

Finished draft of Bombay State report. WCD asked me somewhat petulantly if I objected to his making changes; I said no. This is probably culmination of events such as [Ashok] Mehta report (which if it went out, went out over his name and not mine), my complaints that his wishes re more reporting can be carried out only if he looks at the drafts and gets them out, and my remark that the memo of conversation with D'Souza I sent him, was just that and not a report (he had made extensive changes in what was a routine memcon, even changing my record of things I said while he was not present). I feel as follows: (1) resentment at his having successfully “taken over” people I have worked hard to establish rapport with. I have noticed a definite lack of respect for me when I see these people now; I shouldn't be surprised if he has pulled more than one Sokolov episode. Besides my personal feeling, such business gives outsiders contempt for the office. (2) Annoyance at such things as the Kulkarni business and also the D'Souza one. In the first case, I have spent a good deal of time with [Kulkarni] and with Ashok Mehta, and have managed to establish a modicum of confidence on their part. No pretensions to taking them over or converting them into Americans, but at least we were beginning to talk —

maybe I'm too slow. Within 5 minutes after meeting Kulkarni, WCD launched into a long criticism of the Socialists for calling themselves Marxists. This is hardly the way to go about getting them to stop — a few days later Kulkarni came into my office, obviously sent by Mehta, said, “Mrs. Sanderson, do you also feel about us the way Mr. Dunn does?” What does one say in those circumstances? I hope I convinced him he had misunderstood Mr. Dunn's southern accent. (Another gripe about this episode — he wouldn't let me make the Marxist point in the Mehta reports — said “Dick Deverall just told me so and so, and I myself heard Mehta say at the Council on Foreign Affairs,” etc. I pointed out that Deverall, although he is a valuable source of info, always tells us just what he wants us to believe at a given moment, and this doesn't always jibe either with other info or with what he himself has said previously. But then both he and WCD are inveterate gossips and love “hot political dope” and whispered conversations. The D'Souza thing was less important; it merely involved telling him, and the telling is perfectly ok and perhaps necessary, that as reps of a foreign Govt we couldn't take sides in or show official interest in affairs purely of concern to two other friendly countries. But it was done in an extremely tactless and embarrassing manner. (3) Perhaps the most galling thing: I don't want to share in any of the doubtful glory of operations around here. Who likes can be the social and political lion. But with two-four people doing full time political work, we ought to do some reporting. I don't know what Al does; NVG does a little. As far as I know, Clyde does none, although in my dark moments I wonder if some of mine don't go out as his (probably not — I would like to see copies of the final one, though — or have they all gotten lost because he is too busy?) Clyde has reiterated his desire for reports, both spot and think pieces. He also wants newspaper coverage done by me. But as section head he wants to edit and audit all reports. Result: either they languish in his safe until they become out of date, because he is too busy, or he doesn't like my interpretation of something in the draft. I don't know what keeps him so busy — this office has been on emergency status ever since I came here, and I think it is a lot of baloney. If he knew the political situation here, if he ever bothered to read the clippings or listen or oral reports and analysis, i.e., if he knew his business, I wouldn't object to his pulling me up on reports. But he doesn't — his inside dope — his

complete fund of info as far as I can gather —consists of what he heard from Masani, Moraes, Deverall, the Mayor, Pardiwalla (who is of course completely discredited by others now) or some such — and it is always what they want him to hear. His only claim to fame in this respect is his rank and title.

What to do? We are losing in India, and losing fast. If we should win, iwill be through no fault of our own.... (journal, August 30, 1951)

Attached to the report is a list, whose numbers and other identifications are now a mystery to me, of about seventy reports I prepared between April and early November. A few of them may have gotten through to the Department, a few of these may even have gotten through over my name. I had no way of checking or finding out.

Clyde Dunn hardly covered himself with glory in Bombay:

I have of course no news from the Dunns except roundabout — he apparently is hurt at my “disloyalty” when I was in Washington (having an excellent chance — in fact upon request — to say why the political work in Bombay did not go forward smoothly, I said why). I never had any obligation of loyalty to him; my obligation is to the Foreign Service and to the United States, neither of which he was serving well. He resigned in August, although his tour of duty would not be completed until October and his FSR appointment until Fall 1954. Now that the Democrats have lost I wonder what he'll do? I am sorry for Marge, whom I liked, but these things can't be helped. (to Mama from Athens, November 17, 1952).

No, all Dunn's “operations” did him no good. But they did me no good, either, because I am afraid Tim was right when he cracked that in evaluating a reporting officer's file they don't read it, they weigh it. If many of my reports had gotten through the Department would not have been so concerned about the sparseness of reporting from our shop. How many of those that did get through got through over my name?

And for the final year of my posting at Bombay — the first year in which reporting was my major job — I was stuck under Clyde Dunn. Because he wanted as many “assistants” as he could get, in the great bureaucratic tradition of the importance of the job being dependent on how many people you supervise. And because by then the consulate was already overstaffed and growing. Where, if I were moved, would I be put?

I continued to draft reports and memos but rather lost interest in what happened to them once they hit his desk. I consoled myself otherwise:

A holiday — the second this week. This is the Hindu elephant god's festival. Labor day way quite un-holidayish since I had a party for about 40 local labor people and about 10 people from the Consulate. It was a fair success as those things go, but a lot of work since I was the only one from our shop who knew any of the Indians. (September 5, 1951)

And endless showings of the ILGWU film “With these Hands” to labor union groups all over the area. Since the film wasn't dubbed in any local language and I had to rely on an interpreter to put the story into whatever the language was, as the film was rolling, I'm not sure its points always came through effectively. But these showings put me in touch with people at a level I would otherwise not have met, heads of locals and so on. They often had almost no English, and there the interpreter was useful. And to the viewers, factory workers of various kinds, I may have been the first Westerner, certainly the first American woman, they had ever met in the flesh. I saw parts and aspects of Bombay I would never have seen otherwise. These insights probably did not get through to Washington and if they had, would they have had any effect? But I learned from them.

My usual Sunday letter didn't get written... Robin had a houseguest — one of the trying kind, and I rather had to follow them around and see that no fatal damage was done.... Went to a very good chamber music concert last night — and here I had decided there was no live music in Bombay, after one awful evening at the local symphony, and have been concentrating on Indian music since.... The cut in our allowances that I told you

about has pretty much put a crimp in my hopes for getting new things for the house and table.... But then if they won't pay for better, I can d—n well entertain official guests with dime store stuff, I guess. (August 8, 1951)

Yesterday I had a truly novel experience — took the afternoon off and went to a [American] Women's Club luncheon and bridge party. Had quite a good time even if I did lose at bridge! Looking around I was thinking I had never seen such a relaxed, rested, well-cared for and prosperous bunch of women in one batch in my life. They certainly have an easy life out here — too easy, they are always complaining about nothing.... Anyway, it was great sport, even if once in five years or so is often enough for me. (August 23, 1951)

Mama arrived in mid-November. She immediately became popular at the American Women's Club and elsewhere, as I have described in an earlier chapter. She took a good deal of the household management off my shoulders, a blessing. She was remarkably flexible about the kinds of things that left many American women distraught, as when for example, having heard about the prevalence of rats and snakes and so on, she at first mistook our pale Siamese kittens for rats gamboling on her bed the morning after her arrival, she later told about it as a funny story on herself. When one of our prized geckos scooted up the dining room wall during dinner, she at once understood when I explained their utility in keep down the insect population.

Mama's presence also cemented an association with Bidesh Kulkarni, Ashok Mehta's labor union man. Kulkarni was middle-aged, his mouth betel-stained, his English decent in the Indian-English style. I had had no contact with him outside business until one day he volunteered that he liked to play bridge. We got up a foursome, with Mama and me and possibly Check, who returned shortly after Mama arrived. Kulkarni turned out to be an excellent player, and the foursomes were several times repeated. I think Mama's easy relationship with people like Kulkarni speak for a broadness of spirit that few American women I met had. For his part, Kulkarni dropped some words of wisdom when he once observed that though he and we could play bridge and enjoy one another's company,

none of us would be able to abide his style of living, nor he ours. He was so right. Living abroad taught me one sure thing: whatever my feelings about aspects of our country's culture and society and politics, I shall always be an American. Sometimes I have felt like adding “like it or not” to that statement — but it is the rock-bottom truth.

In December I took off for a long-planned three-week tour of the Central Provinces and Hyderabad.

'Twill be the first time anyone from [the consulate] has made the auto trip in years and I think I can really do some interesting observing, etc., as well as get a taste of how India really lives (cities, especially Bombay, are most unrepresentative — just like New York isn't the USA).... one takes bedrolls, food, [practically everything, and it should be quite an adventure. One stays in places called dak bungalows, which were set up every 30 or 40 miles by the British for tourists, government officials, etc.... I shall also be in Nagpur... will stay at the Maharani's palace in Indore. One thing, though, is that while it won't be comfortable it will be perfectly safe, as Indians are very gentle people... no European has been molested while traveling for about 15 years. I am taking my butler along to help drive and cook and look after me, also someone else from office may go but most of them are too fond of sitting on their fat behinds, or else like air trips to Delhi and such. This just delights me — I think it must be in the blood or something, looking back to some of your safaris around the wild, wild West when we were kinds. (September 5, 1951).

Shiva spoke or understood several of the languages of this part of the country, and said he had been a driver at one time. So a few hours out on the first day (in the event, no one else from the consulate came along), I asked him if he would like to take the wheel. There followed an immense gunning of the engine, then off in a series of bumpy jerks ahead. “Shiva, when last driving?” “East Africa, 1927, Memsahib!” in his best top-sergeant voice. I allowed as how on this trip I would do the work while the car was in motion, and he would work when we stopped.

And work he did. The dak bungalows were furnished only with metal bedsteads. When we would arrive at our destination of the day Shiva would haul out my bedroll and arrange it and the kerosene lamp we had brought along. He would find someone to bring water for my bath, and he would boil some for us to drink. Then he would go out and buy fresh vegetables and eggs, and cook our dinners and prepare a sort of picnic lunch for the following day. He cooked on a tiny Bunsen-burner affair we had also brought with us, along with a couple of pots and a bit of tableware. I don't know where he slept. Perhaps in the car.

Along the route one allowed the people and bullock carts to choose which side to be passed on, and forded all but the largest streams, as usual up country. I haven't really needed a road when I drive; it's speed and heavy traffic that wear me out.

We saw endless villages, many of them just collections of huts of straw and twigs that at a distance a Westerner might have confused with disorderly piles of brush. One saw a few green fields here and there, but after the Fall hot season most of the countryside was brown. It looked empty. Yet whenever we stopped, for lunch, for example, we and the car were soon surrounded, at a distance of fifteen on twenty feet, by a ring of gaping peasants. At first this made me uncomfortable. Then the thought occurred to me: what if, along a highway in Kansas, there stopped a weird caravan of foreign creatures in strange clothing and a huge mysterious-looking vehicle? Would not there have assembled some gaping Kansans?

I had better reason to be uncomfortable one hot hot day when we stopped at a silver-working shop in a small town. I much admired the beautiful niello work I had seen elsewhere, and hoped to find a few pieces at a good price here. The shop, which doubled as workshop, was so dark I wondered how the workmen could see what they were doing. And I got some pretty niello pieces, all of which unfortunately have now disappeared.

But what I really learned at that shop was something else. No word was spoken. But I knew that my outfit — shorts — gave scandal. Now those shorts were no more revealing than the rags the peasant women wore, less so if one considers that I wore a shirt with elbow-length sleeves. But that was not the point. The expanse of white female leg gave scandal. Just as a bathing suit is briefer than most nightgowns, but any public appearance in a nightgown Just Isn't Done. I wore shorts no more up country.

At one largish town, whose name I no longer remember, it had been arranged before I left that the local district officer would give me lunch and show me around the place. He duly showed up at the dak bungalow, a servant bringing along a decent lunch in a metal “tiffin carrier” of stacked pots, of the sort Antonio toted daily to Robin at school. Then we got in his car and took off to see the sights. He spoke the rapid, heavily accented English of the Indian student who has gone to a college (equivalent to a good American secondary education, but heavy on European history and British literature and very light on science, very little about India or its history or culture) where English was taught, very likely by Indian teachers whose own English was learned at second-hand. Faute de mieux English has become the lingua franca of India, but - - even more so, I should say, than American English — it is also a unique English, with locutions and melodies quite unthought of in the mother tongue though he had more Western-style education than I had Indian-style, certainly, he was not “Westernized.” His mouth and teeth were stained bright red from chewing betel nut. When he gave me some “pan,” — beetle leaf wrapped around crushed betel nut — to chew, I found it quite pleasant, as I think he found the cigarette I offered in return. He was proud of his town, which he iterated was “electric city”, i.e. had electricity.

In the course of our drive he asked me all the polite questions. In response I told him inter alia that I was a widow (”divorc#e” carried quite a different connotation in non-Westernized Indian circles than it did elsewhere, and a thoroughly inaccurate one) and that I had one child, a son. He had a wife and large family, whom I did not meet.

Late in the afternoon we stopped at a big temple, and I was invited inside. It was no work of art, but as garish as many Mediterranean Christian churches that serve an unsophisticated flock. It was filled with women. After my host had a few quiet words with the saffron-robed priest, the latter motioned me toward the sacred fire with a gesture of welcome, and I was given a handful of dried blossoms to toss on it while he chanted. I knew, or sensed, that this was a signal honor. I tried to express my gratitude and left what I hoped was a suitable contributory offering — it was probably enormous by local standards.

On our way back to the dak bungalow I thanked my host for the whole experience, especially that of going to the temple. I remarked that it seemed that in India, as in my country, it was the ladies who formed the bulk of the church congregations. “No,” he replied, “but this is Tuesday.” And is Tuesday ladies' day? I asked. Not as such, I learned, but it was the day of the goddess. It was the day on which women who were childless, or had only one or two children, or no sons, went to pray and participate in the ceremony as I had done, to get the goddess's help in giving them more sons.

He had seen my plight and done me the greatest possible favor.

When I got back to Bombay and reported on the trip to Prescott Childs, I told him the story, with the observation that if nine months hence a new member of the consular family should appear at our house, don't blame me, blame the goddess.

The once along the road we came to an encampment of gypsies. Much interested, I stopped, and Shiva was able to convey to them a general idea of who we were and that I should be most grateful if they would let me take some pictures of them. Unfortunately the idea was too general: they expected to see their likenesses immediately, and my camera was not one of the Polaroids which had just come on the market. I was as upset as they were about this misunderstanding, for I thought it possible they might believe I had somehow stolen their souls. I promised to send them copies of the pictures, and Shiva

got something like an address. I wonder if those copies ever reached them? Probably not. More immediately to the point, I somehow discovered that none of the women, and for all I know none of the men, knew what a mirror was. Whereupon I whipped out the little mirror from my purse and got the senior woman present to look in it. The other women who crowded round assured her it was her likeness. After she had somewhat recovered from this extraordinary experience I presented it to her. They were all overwhelmed. So all ended well, and I was ready for the proximate cause of the wanderings of the hero in “The Gods Must Be Crazy”, many decades later.

We also had some interesting brushes with wildlife. Coming around a narrow bend in a large patch of heavy jungle, I stopped, very quickly. What should be reposing a few yards in front of the car, right on the road, but an elephant? We just waited for it to get up and leave, as it did after a while. Thank heaven it was not a curious elephant, for it could easily have overturned the car had it wanted to investigate. The day we stopped to dry our brakes after fording a stream, and spied a tiger examining us from the tall reeds along the bank, I just started the motor again and slowly went on our way, brakeless. Further along another big stretch of heavy jungle we traversed an area whose trees were populated by what seemed millions of big monkeys. The car excited them. Some of them jumped down on the roof and on the hood, banging with hands and feet. The ones that peered and screeched at us through the windshield blocked my view and made it hard to stay on the road. When next we stopped, the car, which had gotten tremendously dusty on the trip, showed a mass of monkey hand prints.

I remember another, almost eerie, experience. We rounded a bend and there, carefully walled off the orchids and banyans and flame trees, was a foursquare brick church, looking for all the world like any Main Street church in Iowa. I thought I must be hallucinating. I just had to stop and find out what this was. A little old man hobbled out to open the gate and motioned us in.

Inside, the church was cool and dark and clean. It was also quite unused. No people, no sign of them, other than the little old man, who turned out to be the caretaker. He motioned me to a framed document on a wall. From it I learned that the church had been built twenty years before, in accordance with the terms of the will of an American gentleman who left money for its construction and maintenance, in order that a symbol of religion might be brought to this non-Christian bit of jungle. (To bring religion to India! talk about coals to Newcastle!). There was no minister or congregation and never had been. No one visited the place except for the occasional amazed traveler like me, and a lawyer who came down from Bombay once a year to inspect the premises.

Nagpur was a fairly major city, with a hotel that could accommodate foreigners. Other than this I remember nothing about it, and unfortunately nothing about Indore and the Maharani's palace, either. I wish I still had my journal notes of this trip, but I have only memory and a long letter to Mama and Robin written from Hyderabad.

In Hyderabad I stayed with Akbar Haidari's family. They were wonderful hosts, delightful people, the women well educated, some having been to school, even to university, in England, as had Akbar himself. I felt as much at home with them as with any of my acquaintances in Bombay.

Of course I've been seeing a lot of people on business, but still have managed a good deal of sightseeing, as the business can often be easily accomplished in the course of recreation (nice system). Saturday morning we drove around the town, saw the Char Minar and the Mecca mosque, some bazaars, and other points of interest. Except for the bazaars the sights were not extraordinary.... In the afternoon I was taken to see the Salar Jung art collection. This is really a fantastic lot of stuff.... [he was] the last of the line... apparently had a collecting mania, for there is everything from a priceless collection of rugs, lovely jade and ivory and jeweled swords and daggers, beautiful old Urdu and Persian manuscripts, and other things almost as precious, to junk like a technically marvelous Japanese embroidery of a polar bear and a mid-Victorian mechanical puppet

show. He has stuff from all over the world — all kinds of gilt Louis furniture, English furniture, Chinese and Japanese furniture and porcelain and screens, two beautiful old Greek vases, even an Egyptian room. We spent three hours in the palace and got [only] a brief glimpse at [the collection].

On our way back we were stopped while the Nizam and his party, in three powerful but old limousines, sped back from their daily prayers at the mosque. We also got in on the tail end of a procession celebrating the release from jail of Mohieddine, one of the top Hyderabadi communists. These last seem to be very popular around here.

Yesterday morning went out and visited the Golconda fort. It is of slightly later vintage than Daulatabad, and was built less exclusively for warfare.... remnants of a big zenana palace, a music room.... also remnants of lovely carving in marble, but very little of this. It must at one time have been beautiful ... but now only granite-and-mortar foundations of the buildings and walls are left....

Had lunch with Nawab Jung, and some friends of his including the chancellor or the university, who is quite a cutup. This was lots of fun. Incidentally, Hyderabad has a fairly large “society,” descendants of baigar nobles .... kings who ruled under the nizam, and others. They are very aristocratic, and the society seems a bit ingrown, but they are charming people.... Many of the women are very fair, much fairer than even the Parsis in Bombay, and have blue or grey eyes and fine features. As a rule they are tall and quite slender, and as a group are very beautiful. I am told that most of them do not now keep purdah.

Yesterday evening Akbar's aunt and cousins took me to part of a wedding ceremony. The weddings go on for several days, and this was the part in which all the ladies take a good look at the bride and the trousseau, and later the groom comes and has his “first look” at the bride, through a mirror. This wedding involved two very prominent families.... when we got to the house there were a couple of hundred beautifully dressed and bejewelled (I shall

never see such jewels again!) women there, also little girls and boys. First we went in to see the bride. She was sitting on a big divan like a bed, covered with a red velvet spread almost hidden with gold embroidery, and surrounded by relatives and friends. She herself was just a great lump of gold and brocades and flowers and jewelry, and was sitting there completely veiled and sort of patiently bearing the burden of all the stuff she was draped in. Whenever someone wanted to take a look at her, a relative brushed away the flowers and veiling from her face and lifted her head up. I was a bit taken aback because her eyes were closed — which is required for a couple of days. She was an exquisite thing, and 15 years old, I was told. I was also told that she had met the boy, and had seen him at dinner and been to the movies with him a few times, so she “knew” him, and it was no longer customary that the bride and groom should not meet [before marrying]. If I sound a bit critical, I should say here that a Scotswoman, Mrs. Wazir, who proudly exhibited her grandchildren to me at the party, remarked that this system seems to be productive of about as many happy marriages as our own. The families who marry their daughters so young are also becoming fewer and fewer; Haidaris, for example, consider 18 or 20 a better age. However, the ceremony is the same, and the poor bride is probably more worn out than even in our own great church affairs! Anyway, we then went to see her trousseau. Included were gifts from the groom, his family, and the girl's family. The groom had given a complete set of beautiful leather travelling cases, sports clothes (they are going to live in England), one diamond and ruby necklace, one great diamond pendant and chain, one 3-strand pearl necklace (big pearls), two large pearl-and-diamond bracelets, several pairs of earrings, a lot of other jewelry, and enough fine French perfume to last about 10 years if used lavishly. The bride's family had given about a dozen huge pieces of silver holloware, several dozen heirloom saris, trousers and kurti (the overshirt worn by Muslim women, now being displaced by the sari), most of them heavily embroidered with gold, silver, and jewels, and a leopard coat, hat and muff, and a lot of stuff I can't remember. Someone had thoughtfully given her a safe, too.

About an hour after we arrived we went out to a large verandah, where another covered divan was placed under a red-and-gold embroidered canopy, with silver poles at the corners. This had a lot of elaborate cushions on it, and here the groom was to have his “first look.” In anticipation of this everyone came out, including about fifty servants and their children, and it was a grand and noisy free-for-all for a good close ringside seat. The mother of the bride, a young-looking woman who is reputed quite an athlete and was rushing around taking charge of things, insisted I sit right by the divan so I could see it all. .... then the groom and his attendants, wearing brocaded achkans and beautiful turbans, came in, and another crush ensued. Everyone was having a marvelous time, including me. All the family jewelry was out — great collars of solid jewels, arms braceleted solid to the elbow, earrings with 10-carat diamonds swinging gracefully in the breeze, pearl hairnets, all nicely set off with the most elaborate saris I've ever seen. A beautiful old woman came in, looking much like Mrs. Lomell, straight-backed and full of dignity; she is over 80 and apparently the doyenne of female society hereabouts. The 16-year-old unofficial “go-between,” who is said to have gotten the idea that the two should be married and gotten them together, was looking very gay and sophisticated, she herself having been married a year or so ago.... The bride was carried in by an old family retainer all dolled up in his military costume, and dumped on the divan. Then an old woman started chanting and throwing rice and pieces of hard candy on the couple, and finally the groom took a mirror and someone pushed the bride's veil up and he took a look. Then she unveiled for everyone to see. By this time she looked exhausted, and the sweat was rolling down her face, taking with it the elaborately traced silver eye makeup, and I suspect a few tears were intermingled.... Finally the groom said “Enough of this” and mercifully carried her off to her car in the courtyard.... full of people, and the bride's and groom's cars were covered with flowers. The procession, including torchbearers and dancers, and about 6 cars, took off slowly, and had gotten about a block up the street when we finally left. It was a fascinating sight.... It did seem hard on the bride, but all the women present, who had gone through it themselves, seemed to have a grand time and to feel that every woman owed it to her family and friends to give them one such show in her

lifetime. In Hyderabad as elsewhere, the most modern people go old-fashioned and put on big shows for weddings and such occasions.

After that I was ready for dinner and early bed....(to Mama and Robin from Hyderabad, December 10, 1951).

As we had arranged to do before I left Bombay, Mama and Robin traveled to Aurangabad by train (thus enjoying an experience I missed in India) and met me there. We again visited the cave temples at Ajanta and the great carved stone temple at Ellora.

Because Mama was in Bombay with me there are no family letters for the remaining time before our departure. Nor have I any journal notes. As I recall, I spent a few days in Delhi, where the Embassy had become so overstaffed that arriving officers might wait two months before a desk and room for it was found for them, and a few days in hospital, for what ailment I have now forgotten. The usual social and domestic round continued.

Early in 1952 Caltex had informed me that they would need my apartment for one of their people who was coming to Bombay with a family. In March, therefore, we broke up housekeeping. We took Shiva with us to the Taj Mahal hotel, where we spent our last month in Bombay, but had to arrange the futures of the other servants. Here Mama shone. I remember only the question of Antonio, our cook. In his two years with us he had developed into a splendid cook. He seemed able to make delicious meals with the sad raw materials available locally, and had adapted many Indian dishes to the Western taste. Naturally several women wanted him. I told him this was his golden opportunity: he could choose the one he liked best and pretty much set his own price. But Antonio didn't see things this way. He was overwhelmed, and miserable. He begged us to make the decision for him, only specifying that he wanted an American memsahib, no British or Indian: “British too hard-boiled, everything boil boil boil!” Mama did make the decision, and it must have been a good one, for the last we heard of Antonio he had accompanied his

new family to Saudi Arabia, where I imagine he was happily making life there a lot more pleasant for them.

Mama also shone during our sale. Such things were meat and drink to her, and she had a marvelous time disposing of the things we would not want or need in Athens. One evening when I came home she was bubbling with amusement. An Englishwoman had come to the house and said she understood we had a “body” for sale. After some initial confusion Mama figured out that what the woman was interested in was my old dress form, which Mama had sent to me.

... we sail either the 31st or April 12th.... We should reach New York (have to go via Atlantic, durn it) between May 5th and 10th. Then either 2-1/2 or 5-1/2 months in the States, depending on whether I take a 3-month course in Washington, and out to Athens....

My tentative plans for the States are to go to Washington for four of five days for consultations, and then visit you all for a few days. I want to buy a good second-hand car, or station wagon if they're not too expensive, and spend the 2-month vacation traveling us around the States. (Figured maybe with a station wagon we could travel nice and cheap — avoid even motels some of the time). Can I get a decent one for $1200 or $1400? Of all times for it to happen, the Indian stock market crashed two weeks ago, and no one has any money, so I'm having trouble selling my chev. If I can't get my original price out of it I'll have it shipped to Greece.... If the training class comes in the middle — which, with my luck, it probably will — I'll get them to keep me in Washington and take the grand tour in the Fall instead. In any case, these plans are unsettled and probably won't be squared away until 10 minutes before we start doing them.... Incidentally, the cats — Siamese named “Rani” and “Raja” are coming with us and, if you think you can stand it, I have high hopes of having a brace of kittens for you to start a Charlotte N.C. branch of the feline family with — they are really darlings. (to Pat and Bob, from Bombay, March 21, 1952)

At the hotel the three of us were put up in two large rooms — I don't know where Shiva bunked — and took our meals at the hotel. I was rather set up one day when a lady tourist, of what nationality I either never knew or have forgotten, remarked to me in the elevator that she had seen me several times “with your mother and your young brother.”

After our farewell party Check discovered a fair-sized cache of liquor that Shiva had secreted somewhere prior to appropriate it. I had always been rather relaxed about the servants' small peculations, but this was a big item. Yet I did not pursue it; after all we were leaving next day. Check taunted me: “So this is your great wonderful example of a bearer!” He was right of course. Mama told me Robin had later confided to her that the thefts had been going on for a long time, but that Shiva had threatened him with all sorts of dire consequences if he told me, so that he was frightened into silence. Since then I have heard other such stories about trusted family retainers.

Foreign Service Officers were pressured to fly out to their posts. There was always some dire need for them there. But going on home leave most took the opportunity for a sea voyage, as I did. And so, one fine warm April day, we boarded our ship and left India.

I have never been able to write about India, as so many American social scientists, having spent a few months there, have done. I always felt that what little I knew was so little as not to justify offering theories and hypotheses — I do not know enough about India. My experience there was limited by my being a foreigner and an official. I saw very little of village-India life (but some), and not much (but more) of urban lower-middle and lower-class life. I never learned any of the Indian languages, and traveled only in the area roughly bounded by Bombay, Delhi, Hyderabad and Goa.

On the other hand, much that I did not consciously take in must have registered in a sort of peripheral-vision, or subconscious way. For when I read something like Vikram Seth's A Suitable Boy it is as if I were there, inside the various characters. India will always be somewhere in my soul.

HOME LEAVE

We left Bombay not on one of those beautiful Isbrandtsen freighters, but on an Italian passenger ship that plied between New Zealand, Australia and Genoa. Most of our fellow-passengers were Australians and New Zealanders, and one or two couples from Tasmania, who were going “home” — many for the first time — on holiday to England.

Traveling first class on passengers ships was a delightful experience. The food was superb; I began the eating binge that put twelve pounds on me during the twenty-eight days between Bombay and New York. Antonio's talents had made up for a great deal, but I hadn't realized how I had missed fine food. The ship's crew were at pains to help the passengers entertain themselves. And time to enjoy some books, watch the dolphins trail the ship, and so on.

This ship's final destination was Genoa. We then had five days on the S.S. Independence, a magnificent cruise ship. Its passengers were mostly Americans on a Mediterranean vacation. I do not remember any stops; perhaps Genoa was the last port of call before New York. Nor do I remember much about the voyage except that its luxury was almost overwhelming. Visiting the kennels one day I saw a dog relishing a huge beautiful raw roast of beef and caught the cats picking at a lobster. I expostulated with the kennel-master: for heaven's sake, just give them kitchen scraps. That's what they get at home. “Aw, we got so much lobster we don't know what to do with it!” So recently surrounded by India and its chronically malnourished people, I had opportunity to reflect on certain absurdities in the world.

We landed in New York and took off for Washington, having shipped the cats by rail to Charlotte. In Washington Robin boarded an early evening plane for Charlotte. I was to stay in Washington for a few days before joining him.

Next morning, after a refreshing sleep in the quasi-fleabag patronized by Foreign Service people temporarily in Washington, I found my purse comb was missing. So before leaving for my first appointment at the State Department I went into a nearby drugstore to get one. I was transfixed. Seemingly miles of shelves full of every possible kind of cosmetic — I had an awful impulse to buy one of each, before they disappeared! But I managed to get myself in hand and limited the splurge to a few items.

Again, I remember little about the assorted consultations except that my hopes for a three-month training session, and my real hopes for a year of advanced study at Harvard, were both dashed. The Athens economic section was too desperately in need of another officer to permit the three months' training, and Harvard would mean cancellation of the Athens assignment altogether. This latter had been part of what I had had in mind: I wanted a Western European post (not Germany, still in terms of American personnel there a semi-occupied country), I wanted to get out of the Near Eastern and Africa area of the State Department, I didn't particularly want to specialize in economic work, I didn't particularly want to go to Athens, a post where the Embassy, though larger than New Delhi's (and I had thought that one badly overstaffed) was dwarfed by the aid and military missions — this in a country that, though its location made it of vital concern to the United States, was after all smaller than any Indian province. But I felt I couldn't be blatant about such reservations about the posting, and got nowhere with my alternates.

I had arrived in Washington in the midst of an early-summer heat wave. Walking down Pennsylvania Avenue one noon, on my way to an appointment at the Department, I felt dizzy. The heat was getting to me. I stopped for a few minutes in a bar that advertised its air conditioning (then a relative rarity, even in commercial establishments). I didn't have a drink, but the bartender kindly gave me a glass of water and told me to just sit until I felt better. Naturally I was late to my appointment, and caused some humorous comment when I gave as my excuse that I had gotten a touch of the heat and had to stop in an air conditioned bar. The girl was from India, and felt the Washington heat?! But yes, I did.

Crowded as downtown Bombay was, there was some greenery here and there, and a lot less asphalt and no towering buildings to catch and hold vicious heat.

Then there was the evening when friends took me for after-dinner drinks on the roof of the Washington hotel. One of the party didn't know me, and apparently didn't believe that I had just returned from India. When we were all comfortably ensconced he turned to me, looked at my drink, and said, “Corey, there's some kind of insect in your drink!” “Oh,” fishing in the drink with a finger, “where do you see it?” He then decided I was indeed a veteran of India.

Pat and I, or I at least, also had a great time shopping. I don't remember what-all we bought, but readying ourselves for a new post involved a long list of purchases. I do remember buying a lot of materials from a superb mill-end shop that happened to be in Charlotte. I didn't know what dressmaking facilities were available in Greece but I did know that few items bought off the rack ever suited me either for style or for fit. Mr. DeGrand, the proprietor of the shop, and Pat and I had a great time choosing a trunk full of marvelous materials which, since I found Eleutheria in Athens, turned themselves into the best wardrobe I have ever had.

Meanwhile Bob, my brother-in-law, had found me a good used station wagon. So Robin and I packed up our things and some of the picnic and — very rudimentary — camping equipment I'd bought and off we went on our two-month, ten-thousand-mile tour of the United States and parts of Mexico.

My rationale for this trip had several aspects. First, I didn't really want to spend the entire home leave with relatives, though Pat's and Bob's hospitality made it a bit hard to tear ourselves away from that segment. Second, as usual we were close to broke; there was certainly no money for an expensive vacation. Third, I had not seen the south and by no means all or most of the rest of the country, and I especially wanted Robin to get to know and understand his own country, since the plan then was to stay in the Foreign Service

and spend most of my career and his youth abroad. The solution seemed to be to get in a vehicle in which the two of us could also sleep, and make a good long trip of it.

I kept neither a written itinerary nor a diary of this trip, so my memory of exact routes sometimes fails, but I do remember the high points. One fine day we started off towards Charleston, where we looked around the charming old place and had a pleasant lunch at a restaurant overlooking the water. Then on to Warm springs, Georgia, to take a look at the “little White House,” where President Roosevelt had died. We stopped at a Sears store in Atlanta and bought a couple of fishing poles and hooks. I had never fished and had no idea what kind to get — for that matter I had no idea of what kind of fish we might be trying to catch as we wended out way across the country. So we just got some inexpensive all-purpose ones. Surprisingly we caught a few (but very few) fish.

My guidebook said there were camping facilities at the Warm Springs park. We got there after sunset, and I could not find them. Finally, well after dark, I spied a lighted building which, when I went in, looked more like a deep-south country tavern than a park facility. This impression was confirmed by the amused ignorance of the people there when I asked about camping places. So I got back in the wagon, drove around a bit more, and near a small lake found one of those outdoor cooking fireplaces built by the WPA during the depression. I gave up. We just parked the wagon, spread out our bedrolls in it, and went to sleep.

Next morning Robin wanted to try his luck at fishing in the lake. Off he went while I tried to start a fire, a near-impossible job in those WPA monstrosities. I was having little success when a pickup truck pulled up and two men got out of it. Oh, oh. Here were the park people, ready to tell me I had violated some rule by just parking and camping, outside the designated area. I rather apprehensively asked if one of them was the park superintendent. I also assured them I had tried to find the campground but hadn't been able to do so in the dark the previous evening. They grinned at this and replied No, but could they be of any help to us. I explained my difficulties with the fire and Robin's lack

of experience at fishing. Whereupon one of them went off to help him out and the other started to build a proper fire.

After a few exchanges of pleasantries my companion asked, “Do you know why we laughed when you asked if one of us was the Park superintendent? We're convicts.”

Now my notion of convicts in the south was exclusively based on the old Paul Muni film “I Am A Fugitive from a Chain Gang.” So my response was, Why aren't you wearing those striped suits? How come you're running around in a truck?

Then it all came out. They were trusties, charged with looking after the park and keeping it fairly clean and decent. My companion had been convicted of fencing several hundred stolen cars; of course he wasn't guilty, it was all a frame-up. By the way, wasn't I scared when he told me they were convicts?

No, said I, and if I had been what good would that have done us. Have some breakfast with us; you're being very nice to us.

By then the fire was going merrily, and I had coffee ready and eggs and pancake batter ready to go. So Robin and the other fellow came back, fishless, from the lake and we all tucked in to a nice big breakfast. After that we said our farewells and went on our separate ways.

I remember going through an endless swamp, through which the road stood several feet above the water in that season, and on poor roads, just barely two lanes, (almost all highways were two-lane then, even the main ones between the West and Chicago; certainly these in the South were) through a lot of desolate land on which we saw the occasional tumbledown sharecropper's shack, usually festooned with adults and children all looking desperately poor, their faces bearing that expression of dumb acceptance I had seen in village India. Not the United States I had known.

The next stop I remember is Natchez, where we visited two or three semi-restored antebellum mansions. Beautiful old places. In one, however, the saccharine-voiced lady guide must have gotten a bit on Robin's nerves, because after the umpteenth time she had turned to him and purred, “Now little boy, look at this sofa (or gun, or mirror, or whatever) — it's more than a hundred years old!” Robin replied, with his “English” (Anglo-Indian) accent, “Well, the Ajanta caves are more than one thousand five hundred years old.” I remember her shock. I explained we had recently arrived from India. She then decided we were Indians —she must never have seen one — and couldn't figure out why I didn't “talk funny, only like a Yankee.” I didn't try to enlighten her. We ran into the same misapprehension in New Orleans when I wore a sari to the decent restaurant we treated ourselves to, along with a motel room in which we could bathe and have a real freshen-up, and perhaps elsewhere along the line. The misapprehension made us no difficulties, quite the contrary. (The New Orleans motel was in part a response to the previous night, during which in the car we had been practically eaten alive by mosquitoes).

Besides briefly tasting civilization, we explored the French Quarter in New Orleans and readied ourselves for what looked like an endless journey across Texas. It did seem endless, too. Given the roads and cars of those days fifty miles an hour was a good speed, more than one could plan on averaging over a day's run. And I wasn't enthusiastic about “making time,” I wanted us to see the place as we went along. So we went at our own pace, and had a rather pleasant time of it. Robin of course was full of questions, many of which I couldn't answer very satisfactorily. So thick and fast they came that about five o'clock each evening I would turn to him and say “Robin, question time is over for the day.” Not a rule I made stick really well.

Next to Monterrey in Mexico. I have not been back to Monterrey, but from all reports it is an entirely different place from the sleepy, delightful town of 1952. Certainly, Mexico was poor, but so was India — in a word, we now knew most of the world, including our own south, was poor, and we — Robin, I, and our people — just inexplicably among the

terrifically blest. Mexico was beautiful. The colors of everything — landscape, sky, cities, people — reached some place in my mind and stuck. I decided a post there would not be a bad thing.

From Monterrey we drove to Saltillo. In Mexico we did stay in hotels, or rather in inns. Was it the one in Monterrey or the one in Saltillo that played such a soothing part when during the frenetic Chicago years I would lull myself to sleep with fantasies, memories really, of lolling in a tropical chair-lounge on a verandah overlooking a pretty courtyard, a long drink in my hand and nothing but contentment in my mind?

Either in Monterrey or in Saltillo I fell in love with the pottery made by the Indians in Oaxaca, and bought a lot of it; ideal, I thought, for everyday use thereafter. I waited until we got back to the States to have it packed for shipping.

Back to the USA via Eagle Pass. We got there after dark, and there US Customs declined to recognize my diplomatic passport and wanted to see the whole contents of the wagon. Besides our luggage and camping gear I had a lot of stuff from India: my jewelry, several Persian and Bokhara carpets, miscellaneous gifts of all sorts. All this interested them not at all. What they did make me pay duty on was a bottle of Sazerac cocktail I had gotten in New Orleans at Bob Yandell's request.

For the next day or two we followed the Rio Grande on the US side. What struck me there was the contrast between the two banks of the river. On the Mexican side, desert. On the U.S. side, irrigated, rich green fields. I can see why irrigation has been such a temptation for dry-country people throughout history, even though its not-so-long-term effects have often been unfortunate.

Another thing struck me one day when we were taking a meal in some exceedingly plain little eatery in West Texas. I never saw so many huge tall men in my life! the effect exaggerated of course by their high-heeled cowboy boots, their ten-gallon hats, and their

peculiar walk — a cross between a slouch and a strut. Combined with their talk, it did seem like a movie set for a Western film.

At another cafe Robin excused himself to go to the men's room. In a few minutes he came back, scandal and annoyance on his face: “Mummy, they make you pay!” to use the toilet. An early lesson in free enterprise at work, and poverty as the real transgression.

We visited the Carlsbad caverns in New Mexico. Wondrous caves, unbelievable formations — and almost invisible behind the junk of concessions and too many tourists. We were of course part of the problem, which is a problem: the public owns the national parks and monuments and should have access to them, yet it is precisely their isolation from great gobs of humanity and the detritus thereof that gives them their character.

From there were proceeded more or less diagonally through New Mexico. Somewhere along the line, badly in need of baths and also in need of economy, I discovered one of the real comforts of the road in the old days: the railroad hotel. Find some smallish town, go along the tracks, and you might well find one of these places, where railroad crews could spend their time between shifts and be fed and bedded cheaply. Facilities were basic. If I remember correctly there was a bowl and pitcher in our room, with toilet down the hall, perhaps a rental shower — this last I don't remember. Not luxurious bathing, but adequate for our purposes. And a sturdy rope coiled around a sturdy hook in the window sill. In case of fire you slid down the rope to safety. All this for a dollar or so. Before you left in the morning you could buy a large plain cafeteria-style breakfast. A splendid institution.

I had read about the Indians of the pueblos and wanted to visit one. For some reason I chose the Acoma Pueblo. After leaving the highway the road got rougher and narrower and steeper, until at last it was a mere track winding up a hill. I had to put the wagon in low gear. When we got to the pueblo on the mesa above, it was a sorry sight. A few shacks, no better — possibly worse — than the sharecroppers' ones we had seen in the South. A few people sitting about, silent. None admitted to understanding English. And in their eyes

not the mute submission of peasants but resentful hatred, the sort one occasionally sees nowadays in the eyes of young blacks. We didn't stay there long.

On to Gallup. Gallup was in the midst of some sort of an Indian-days festival. We saw several dances and ceremonies, I suspect of questionable authenticity, and a good deal of wild-Western style drinking and carousing. I also found a shipping office where, having paid their stated fee for careful wrapping and forwarding to Greece, I left my precious Oaxaca pottery.

We must have visited Grand Canyon because I remember Flagstaff, but of that visit, or of a visit to Bryce, which we must also have made, I remember nothing. I do remember Zion — I could never forget a visit to Zion. There we stayed economy-style, in the trailer park and sleeping in the wagon. Rather primitive, but we were young and it didn't matter. I did give us one splurge. I hired horses and a wrangler for a half-day trip up one of the rims. Robin's instruction in riding in India stood him in good stead. Never a great horsewoman, I had not been on a horse since Hamilton days and had some trouble keeping mine from stopping and eating all the time. A few times it seemed to me the creature meant to dump me over into the 2000-foot drop to the canyon floor. But it was a fun day nonetheless.

Then to Salt Lake, where we spent two or three days with Grandma and Aunt Mary. From there to Boise to stay with Mama. Somewhere en route Robin discovered slot machines. Sure enough, the first nickel he put in yielded five or six back! a sure way to riches! but after he then fed them all including his original stake back in with no result I think he decided that being a gambling man was not his future. Somewhere along the line he also got a lot of comic books. As with the TV, he was enchanted with them for a few days, then seemed to tire of them forever.

I think it was on this visit that Robin confided to me, “Mummy, the Boise hotel isn't as tall as it used to be!” No, it wasn't in his eyes. He had seen Washington and New York and Bombay.

After a week or so we again took off, this time heading for Spokane vis Lewiston and Pullman. We stopped in the late afternoon by a stream, and again went fishing. This time Robin caught a couple of trout, and we ate them with the relish of achievement. Our meal, however, was interrupted by the arrival of a man in a small truck, who came down to our campsite and asked, “Ma'am, have you got a license?”

“Oh yes,” I answered brightly. Could he see it? Yes indeed said I, and went to the car's glove compartment, got it, and proudly showed him my Indian driver's license, an impressive affair that unwound in eight or ten pages folded accordion-style.

Well, he had meant a fishing license. I gave him the impression I had no idea what a fishing license was. He let this pass, being so intensely curious about the driver's license. I explained a little about its provenance, and that we were on a great trip of the USA between foreign posts. The car, with its North Carolina license plates, didn't give us away as Idahoans. He allowed as how he was a schoolteacher most of the year, and how he wished he could show that license to his third-graders — but of course he knew I had to keep it as it was my only driver's license — wished us well, and took off.

About fifty miles out of Spokane next day I telephoned the Davenport Hotel there and made reservations for us, as the American vice consul from Bombay and her little boy. By then we and the car were a disreputable mess, having camped out for two nights, smelling of fish and campfires and whatnot. Having parked the car in the hotel garage, Robin and I proceeded through the elegant Davenport lobby and presented ourselves to the reservations clerk. He took one look at us and seemed ready to call the hotel bouncer. I identified us as the American vice consul from Bombay et cetera, and said, “We saw your billboard down the road that said 'Come as you are!'”

Duly established in our room we underwent major cleanups and grooming, then met Robin's father, with whom I had made the arrangement previously, had a pleasant enough dinner in the hotel coffee shop and a pleasant enough chat in the room thereafter.

Then to Yellowstone Park where we saw the geysers, the bears, and the other impressive sights. We spent a couple of days there, then took off for Chicago, stopping and camping somewhere in Wyoming the first night. When we woke up the wagon and all round us was covered with snow. I have since run into more than one late June snowstorm in that high austere country. By late afternoon next day, somewhere in Nebraska, our thermometer registered 100 F. What I remember about the onward trip is forever either trying to pass or trying to permit others to pass me on the heavily-traveled two-lane highway.

We stayed several days with friends in Chicago. I saw old pals, took Robin to the Museum of Science and Industry and around the University, and generally had a good time. On to Charlotte via Indiana, Ohio, and West Virginia (where my main recollection is following trucks up hill and down dale, unable to pass for miles and miles and miles — it did permit glimpses of pretty country, though).

We got to Charlotte in time to celebrate July 4th with Pat and her family. Bob sold the wagon for me and we prepared for our last leg — Washington. I think our trip was a success. At any rate we learned a lot about the U.S.A., and that was the general idea to begin with.

We and the cats, who had stayed in Charlotte, got back to Washington about July 20, staying with Maude Cowan, an old friend of Mama's. Robin had a birthday party, I again checked in with the Department to make final departure arrangements and saw old friends, and a few days later flew off to Greece.

ATHENS

We got to Athens at 6 a.m. and were met, taken to a hotel, and left there. The clerk insisted there were no reservations for us.... we finally got a room, had a bit of breakfast and went to bed. At 4:30 p.m. I got a phone call from the Embassy apologizing all over the place; the fellow who met us had not been told we were posted here and somehow had

taken us to the wrong hotel. So we packed up again, went to the right hotel, were invited out to dinner, and both folded up at 10, went home and slept until 8:30 this morning.... this hotel is all right except that we have to go 2 blocks away to eat in a very poor mess where the charges are high and we had a fine time getting food for the cats. Also there is no phone and was no electricity from last night until this afternoon.... the U.S. has a very fancy office of about 100 people who have taken over hotels and restaurants for the Americans out here and are responsible for the “care” we've had so far. I am going to get us a house, but quick.... We are so well taken care of that I haven't yet gotten to the office — too busy arranging the simple necessities of life — but Athens in general looks like a lovely place. (July 30, 1952)

A fitting beginning for our posting at Athens. In the event, we spent nearly three months in two small starkly furnished rooms in that hotel, which had been taken over by the American mission.

I've had some of my furniture taken out and put in [the rooms] — the furniture was pretty badly mashed up en route; hope the maple, which hasn't yet arrived, fared better — so it isn't bad, but I had to wax it all myself, which was an awful job. Have fixed up one of the two baths as a kitchenette but with no refrigerator and only a hotplate cooking is a chore. (Can't eat in the hotel dining room as our meals would cost $7.00 per day). Have also been doing the laundry by hand and ironing on a sleeve board.

Robin is just an angel — he has washed the dishes several times & is always interested in helping to get the meals (still throws his clothes around, though!). There are battalions and regiments of boys his age around, and a lovely swimming pool behind the hotel, besides large grounds to play in, trees to climb, etc., and he is enjoying himself. If I can make him sit still long enough, & fend off “the guys,” I'll have him write you soon. You know — he wants to write but can't resist playing & says “later.” (August 25, 1952).

I don't remember what I did, until Robin's school started, about getting him looked after while I was at work. For I did get to the office, two days after our arrival. But for reasons that I hope will become apparent, I shall mention my work only incidentally until after describing other aspects of our lives in Athens. Suffice it to say here that the American Mission in Greece included the several hundred people employed by MSA, the Aid agency (more, now that aid was only a fraction of its former level than when it was at its high, and including the 100-odd people devoted to looking after the housing and other basic interests of American mission personnel), several hundred — perhaps more — military advisers, and the Embassy, which with the USIS probably had about 50 American personnel, including clerical people and attach#s but not including six or eight Marine guards or the CIA office, whose size I was never able to estimate. Nor could I estimate the number of Greeks employed by these various offices. MSA and the military (except the Marine guards at the embassy) kept American hours. In partial conformity with Greek commercial and government hours and the traditional — and sensible — long Mediterranean siesta, the embassy was open from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. five days a week, reopened from 5 to 8 p.m. two or three weekdays, and embassy personnel had duty alternative Saturday mornings. This will explain my freedom for such activities as Cub Scouts of afternoons.

Robin starts school tomorrow ... Thank goodness Uncle Sam came through and agreed to pick up all but $100 per year per child of the tuition... It was $335 and most of us had no idea how we were going to meet it. He's really very anxious to get started again, although he makes the usual boy-noises of disgruntlement about it....(September 18, 1952)

I had hoped to enroll him at Athens College, an excellent school run under joint Greek and (nonofficial) American auspices, attended by the children of the Greek elite and a few European and other foreigners. But Robin's still-tenuous command of Greek, and more important, the financial aspects, precluded that option. So he went to the American school, one set up by the military and oriented on strictly American lines. Although its academic standards stood up well by comparison with most American public schools, they were by

no means at the level either of Athens College or of his school in Bombay. On the other hand, he made scads of friends and thus had a great time.

Life in the hotel became less and less possible. It was extremely difficult to make us good meals out of cans, with no refrigeration, and with a single-burner hotplate to cook on. Yet it was out of the question, financially, to eat regularly in the hotel mess. Having no car and the PX being twenty miles away in Piraeus, I was dependent on nearby Greek sources of groceries except when a colleague's wife remembered my plight and was kind enough to offer me a lift. It was of course impossible even to consider entertaining, repaying any of the numerous invitations that came my way (official invitations did not require reciprocation, but others did).

But there were three good things about our hotel stint. First, Robin rapidly made acquaintance with many of his future schoolmates and became friends with them. Second, the difficulties of getting to the PX made it necessary for me to learn at least enough Greek to shop; I got a Greek language book worked hard on it, and made quite a bit of progress.

Robin left his sweater outside at the hotel and it was stolen — poor child, now he has to wait till one I ordered from Sears comes. Our trunks from Charlotte, with the few warm things we had before we left, haven't come yet. (October 18, 1952).

I made urgent representations to the administrative people about housing, but got little sympathy and no help. Why? In the first place, these people were employed by MSA and had the pay and allowance structure of that agency, which in Athens was different and much more generous than that of the Foreign Service. Then, as I later discovered, the US had taken over most of the hotels and many of the good rental houses in the Athens area, so for practical purposes all the military, and all MSA and Foreign Service senior officers, most middle-ranking ones, and even a few juniors (including my Class 5 colleague in the economic section) had this housing, which was fairly good to begin with and nicely maintained by the US government. And of the junior officers, most had at least some, and

several a great deal, of private income; they could afford to rent places far outside the range of those of us — I only discovered three besides myself — who had to live on our foreign Service salaries. Of the three, one, a bachelor, had a tiny dingy apartment, and the other two very uncomfortable habitations.

The administrative people had a list of available housing, and when in September my car had arrived and at last been put together, I looked at a lot of them. They were uniformly unlivable for Americans (e.g no heat, no electric outlets, no kitchen cabinets or facilities other than a cold-water sink), and uniformly priced at the very top of the range of possibility.

At last I found a place on my own. It was still under construction but was almost finished, and would be quite satisfactory:

Now the administrative people are in it: they insist on seeing places and passing on rentals, etc., before we sign a contract. This is a good idea per se, as people may not be sufficiently watchful and get themselves into messes. But they have fouled this one up; called me this a.m. to tell me the owner had decided not to rent it after all. I was no end downcast, so decided to call the owner myself. He most emphatically denied saying that, in fact said he had planned to come and see me this afternoon.... the place isn't quite finished and the heating system isn't in. He wants me to get one from the US for him. This is ok with me; he will pay me in drachmae and I will order it — fortunately I have lots of weight allowance left.... This routine seems to be fairly common around here. The admin. people have taken exception to it, on the ground that I should demand a fully finished place. They, of course, have no such place in sight to offer us, so I guess we are supposed to exist in the hotel forever. I have made a deal with the landlord, that if I get him the heater, he will spend half the difference (they cost 3 times as much here and anyway there are none on the market) on extra shelves and closets and so on.... (September 29, 1952)

But that one fell through. In desperation I took a place on the JAS list:

We moved into a house Monday....All my furniture has to be refinished and much of it mended; I have to have kitchen cabinets and things made; the electrician put in 6 wall outlets so we can hook up a minimum of lamps, etc. [all at my expense]. When you take a house unfurnished it's really unfurnished. This one is “furnished”, with 2 cots, table and 4 straight chairs, 3 stuffed chairs and 1 end table [all in nearly unusable condition]. It isn't as nice as I wanted, but it can be quite comfortable and attractive with my things in it. (October 14, 1952)

Have also hired a maid — a strapping good-tempered girl. She speaks only Greek so our Greek is progressing rapidly. She doesn't know how to serve but is willing and bright so I can train her. And she can certainly work: I never saw such scrubbing and so on, and she washes [by hand, in cold water] great quantities of stuff every day. This is good because every stitch of stuff from Bombay was filthy — all the trunks were banged so they cracked, etc. So it's blankets, bedspreads, curtains, slipcovers, table linens, towels — everything. (October 18, 1952)

Anna was twenty, and came from Serifos, that island which Socrates used an the example of “the sticks.” It had apparently changed little from his time. She was more than willing to work and learn. She learned to serve, and to more or less follow American standards of housekeeping. I could not teach her to cook. Much as I hate generalizations, I must say that the Greeks, like the English, are not by nature cooks. How it comes about that their standard occupation on emigration to the United States was in restaurants I do not know. I suspect that is one reason why the American taste for good non-indigenous food remained so primitive for so long. So I did the cooking — she did learn to chop vegetables, which always helps, and did the cleanup, a big item when — both in this place and the one we took later — it was all a cold-water job.

Thank goodness the refrigerator is here and will be installed within a week. The carpenter was there almost all day yesterday installing kitchen cabinets and storeroom shelves. These are among the many things not included in “furnished” houses here. Robin is doing a bit of carpentry too; has his stuff set up on his verandah. (November 12, 1952)

Unfortunately, the place could not be made “quite comfortable and attractive.” It was the ground floor of a house built in the pretentious “elegant” style affected in Eastern Europe at the turn of the century: marble floors and pillars in the main rooms, cavernous high ceilings, gloomy and dark, impossible to get or keep clean. The two bedrooms and bath were primitive. The kitchen was furnished with a cold-water sink and nothing else. There wasn't enough power for electric cooking, so I got a two-burner kerosene hotplate. There was no telephone, and unless a telephone and line were already installed on the premises, one waited for months to get one. And, contrary to the description given me, there was no central heating (and no fireplace), and no way to heat water except on the kitchen hotplate. We bathed cold, and as cold weather set in I acquired two portable kerosene heaters (smelly), which we lugged around with us, doing our best to be a little less cold. At table we would sit each with a heater on one side of his chair; after ten minutes or so we would move it to the other side, in a sort of single-unit toaster effect.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, I entertained on at least one occasion.

We had Christmas dinner with some nice American friends. I followed the Greek custom of playing cards on New Year's Eve, and my Greek beau and I won a fair hunk of money before midnight and champagne broke up the game. Then home, and I made eggnog for a party I had yesterday at noon... a great success, about 50 people, but boy! try beating up 5 dozen eggs — separated — and 10 quarts of cream some morning between 2 and 3:30 a.m. [with a hand beater]. The stuff filled the inset pan of the roaster, the pressure cooker and two other big pots! and was awfully good really. I had a lot of people — the charg# d'affaires, a lot of Embassy people, some from the other embassies, the Governor of the Bank of Greece and his wife and a few from the ministries, and a couple of business

couples.... all my beaux and such other presentable single men as I know, and some pretty and nice gals. I told each of the beaux-and-other-presentables he had to see that so-and-so was looked after, sicced them on them so to speak, so all had a fine time of it and the last of them didn't leave until 5. I went and got Robin, who was over at my boss's house playing with their 10-year-old who is one of his best chums, and when we got home found a small delegation from the party had returned. In view of the holiday today they thought we should have a party later. It was the maid's well-deserved night out so we ... [took] Robin and made a night of it.... It was glorious fun and Robin was thrilled to stay up until midnight (January 2, 1953).

Our purgatory in that house, which still beat the hotel, went on for five months, until mid-April. Then:

We've moved out of our old house; got a very good deal on a new one ... out in the country — 11 miles from my office, but less than a mile from the school where Robin will go next year.... it is warm, has central oil heating and has a telephone.... Robin... plans a vegetable garden and a “shack” out back. (March 12, 1953)

Our landlords had used our cottage as a summer place until the war. They had repaired the worst damages of its German and later communist occupation, but the stucco exterior was still pockmarked with bullet holes. The Dimaras' had survived the German occupation relatively intact, but had lost a son to the Greek civil war. They were of “old” Greek society. Mrs. Dimaras kept her grandmother's high school diploma framed in her drawing room, explaining to me that in her grandmother's day, literacy itself was rare enough even for well born young women. This I understood from the pride my own maternal grandmother took in her education by the Episcopalian ladies. Mrs. Dimaras visited Paris annually, and on her return invited me to lunch and admire her new wardrobe and recent tucks in an ongoing facelift procedure. An interesting and likable character.

One reached the cottage by driving down a country road from, Kifisia, then through an olive grove. It stood on enough ground that we could make a small garden and enjoy the fish pond in front. Even more ambitious projects were possible:

If Anna will take care of them, I think I'll buy 3 or 4 chickens, as eggs are $.10 apiece on the local market and the storage eggs at the Commissary (.62/doz.) taste very “storage-ey.” (March 27, 1953).

I think nothing came of this chicken project.

I put some of our rattan furniture from India in the glassed-in verandah through which one entered the cottage, and the rest in the squarish room it gave onto. To the right of this room was a dining room and to the left a bedroom that became Robin's and into which his teak furniture fit nicely. Behind the squarish room was a small cozy room with a fireplace; we used the two rooms as living room. Giving off the back center room was my small bedroom. The bath and kitchen occupied the back corner on the other side. The maid's quarters was a small separate building just beyond the door leading outside from the kitchen. Mama sent the bird's eye maple bedroom furniture Aunt Mary had given me, the beautiful dining set from our Ogden house, and the huge ugly sofa and overstuffed chair that came with the house at 706 Wallace in Coeur d'Alene.

There followed great remodeling of my drapes from India, all sorts of other refurbishing, and a huge order to Sears Roebuck for lamps and other household items. When this order arrived half the things had been damaged because of careless packing, and the other half were either items I had not ordered or were otherwise wrong; many of the things I did order did not arrive at all. Some hot correspondence followed, and eventually my order was almost properly filled. A few months later a Sears man came through Athens drumming up business with the Americans stationed there. At my request he came to my office, full, I think, of thoughts of a nice big order. Instead, I showed him the correspondence. He looked at it, sighed, and said, “You know, when orders come in

they are given, by weight, to girls who may or may not be high school graduates. They have a daily quota, and sometimes orders get filled rather carelessly." Thus began a long and often difficult relationship. The good part of Sears is that you get exactly what is described in the catalog or what you see in the store, no more, no less (if it doesn't say preshrunk and colorfast be sure it will shrink and run; if it doesn't say washable be sure it will disintegrate, but if it does say these things the items will perform accordingly). The bad part is in delivery. I had my last go-round with them in September 1995. I have learned how to win these skirmishes quickly and to my satisfaction.

Within two or three months the little place was in good order and, with occasional exceptions for failing electricity and so on, both Robin and I enjoyed living there.

One day in the Fall of 1953 I found Anna and Robin in one of the olive trees in the grove between the road and our house, busily harvesting the ripe crop. Anna said she would put them in brine to make our winter supply. "But", I expostulated, we mustn't pick those olives. They don't belong to us. They belong to the demos (municipality)." "What is a demos?" "It is the town itself — all the people. All the people own these olives, and they will be harvested and the demos will sell them." "Well, if the olives belong to all the peoples, we are just taking our share now!" I didn't feel up to a full scale civics lessons in Anna's Serifos Greek.

We finally got our washing machine.... Anna was so pleased with it, after washing everything in the bathtub for 6 months... She had never used one before...[I demonstrated the first wash]; when she went to use it the second time she reported it was kaput... it didn't heat the water! Now that we understand about putting hot water in the machine to begin with, all is well. (March 27, 1953)

I have mentioned that the American Mission had a PX and a commissary. The PX was useful for buying cigarettes, beer and hard liquor, men's and some boy's clothing of the type favored by military customers and families, Kleenex, toilet paper and a limited

selections of cosmetics, and all sorts of gadgets and gewgaws such as 400-day clocks from Germany, which in my experience invariably went permanently out of order after a few months. The commissary, located in Piraeus (nearly 20 miles from our cottage) was well supplied with canned and frozen things, and cold storage vegetables. I don't remember where its perishable dairy items came from. I continued to use both PX and commissary, but on a decreasing scale as I became familiar with what was available locally. The butchers stocked excellent Argentine beef and quite decent lamb, pork and poultry. Local fish and seafood were fresh and delicious. Produce was strictly seasonal — we never had a salad that included both lettuce and tomatoes, for example — and it wasn't always visually perfect, but how freshly delicious! We found a bakery in a village not far from our cottage; when Robin and I drove over for a bread supply the bread was often hot from the oven, and often there was one less loaf in the load by the time we got home. Good, and clean, dairy products were also to be had, and of course lovely olives and delicacies such as pita (in Greece pitas were made of mille-feuille dough stuffed with spinach, cheese, or meat), dolmades (stuffed grape leaves), moussaka, and sweet pastries.

That I had learned enough Greek to make my wants known in detail helped. I would march into the butcher shop armed with my American, French or Greek cookbook, and have long conferences about which cuts would be best for my purposes. Then the butcher would haul down the side of meat that hung there and cut it to my order. Oddly enough meat prices were not much different for the choicest cuts than for the others; therefore my dinner-party mainstay became roast tenderloin of beef, a luxury I have rarely indulged in since. I became a special favorite with these shopkeepers because I could interpret and mediate when on occasion when I entered a shop the proprietor would be trying his level best to suit the wants of some Army wife who hadn't had time to make the trip to the commissary and who had the common notion that if you shout loud enough in English anyone would understand you: “I want this-or-that, and I want it nigh-eece!”

My car was stolen a few days ago, a common occurrence around here, but the police found it within 2 days and all the damage was a jammed lock and cut ignition cord. Gangs of kids steal them, go joyriding in them, and leave them when they run out of gas. (May 1953)

Not long after this I decided to sell the Chevy, which used a lot of expensive gas and never ran very well, and less well after its hard life after I left Bombay and before it got to Greece. A woman friend of mine had a little Fiat and loved it. So, after much backing and filling with the administrative people, I imported a Fiat. And loved it.

The memorable part of this whole transaction, however, was the selling of the Chevy. The buyer was a woman who would use it as her prika (dowry) and set up her intended as a taxi driver. There followed a three-hour session including the happy pair, each of the lawyers, and me, all but me hammering out the details with even more acrimony that usual in such cases among Greeks (even their casual conversations sounded like quarrels to the foreign ear; they weren't quarrels, it is just the way the language sounds. Someone told me that when I spoke Greek “it sounds like music.” My voice is certainly not musical except by comparison). The main bone of contention was the bride's unwillingness to hand over title to the groom. What if the marriage didn't work out? If she didn't keep title, she couldn't get her prika back. I then made my one and only comment: why didn't she get the taxi-driver's medallion or whatever it was, then hire him to do the actual driving? Owners and drivers did not have to be the same people. That wasn't practical; women didn't get taxi drivers' medallions in Greece. I don't know how that problem was finally decided. Maybe the bride, who was on the far side of marriageable age, folded. But the deal did come through. There followed an afternoon when one of the lawyers arrived at my office with a suitcase in which were packed $2000 in drachmae. The largest drachma bill being 10,000 — $.50 — it took the afternoon to count it.

Our own little maid, Anna, was saving almost her whole wages for prika. She intended to buy some ghi (land), with it. Though as yet she had no fianc# I knew that her whole

ambition in life was to marry (as it was with Greek peasant women generally), and that once the prika was there a candidate would present himself. So for her Christmas present in 1953 I gave her many yards of white satin and a lace bridal veil, both from Sears. Alas, it turned out she really wanted a ready-made bridal dress. Ready-mades were pretty bad in Greece, but from her point of view they represented status and luxury that made-to-order things like the black silk dress uniform with white organdy apron and cap, that I had my own modiste make for her, could not match.

And alas, late in 1953 Anna fell madly in love. So madly that she became pregnant. That separate little maid's house was a very bad thing for Anna, the little girl from the sticks of Serifos. And her prika was by no means complete.

Somehow the whole thing seemed to fall in my lap at one point. There was a session in my living room one evening with Anna, the young man and his parents. His mother, an unpleasant old peasant women, kept wringing her hands and moaning that for her son only a koritzi (virgin) would do. I commented that he had already had his koritzi. This didn't count, of course.

I suspect this session was intended to produce the money to make up the prika from me. If that was the case it didn't work, for I didn't have any extra money and didn't feel myself responsible for Anna's behavior.

I didn't resent this attempt, or any of the other real or alleged sharp practices that made many of my compatriots dislike and despise the Greeks. A mercantile people, most of them desperately poor and all long under oppressive foreign rule, then subjected to the rigors of the German occupation and the subsequent bitter civil war, were unlikely to have the high ethical standards about money that more comfortable people professed (but did not uniformly practice, I had noticed). And there was much about the Greek character that was truly lovable. In fact I loved Greece and felt at home there: the starkly beautiful landscapes; the quality of the light, which so many have ecstatically remarked on; the

sense and evidence of layer upon layer of human history present for contemplation; the warmth I sensed in people of all stations in life.

I don't remember the details of the denouement of the Anna episode. She threatened to have an abortion and to have her hymen resewn; then she would again be koritzi. Possibly she did that. In any case she left my service. I did not feel responsible for what had happened to her, but I could not lay myself open to further problems, and I discovered that she had slacked off dreadfully in her work. She had been with us over a year, I had been very busy and insufficiently watchful about the domestic order:

The house [is] filthy and great piles of laundry stashed away. But I found a really good laundry which is also cheap — took 62 pounds of stuff to them the other day! — and got a really good cleaning woman who is working her head off. Decided to do spring housecleaning now (although it's snowing out) since we would have to do so much in any case.... Our new regular maid will come beginning the 1st.... She is 45 and unlikely to fall madly — and I use the term in several of its meanings! — in love. (January 26, 1954).

Anna wanted me to find her another American kyria (mistress), but I did feel that doing so would imply some responsibility on my part to her next employer, and that she needed the watchful eye and discipline of a Greek mistress.

The next maid, unfortunately, didn't last long. She came as the maid of a friend of Marnie's, who was unemployed after the friend's transfer. Our security man, to whom we were supposed to apply for investigation of all household employees, said she had convictions for prostitution on her record.In itself this didn't make firing her mandatory. Give the poor woman a chance, I thought, so I kept her on. But when Marnie came to dinner one evening and after the maid had come in to serve, Marnie told me this woman was not the same person as her friend's maid. I didn't have to fire her. She had decamped before she finished serving dinner.

A few weeks after that a competent woman named Keti came to us. I remember little about her except that she stayed with us until we left, doing a good job of work. So much for servant problems.

In another area of practical life, early on I

....found an excellent dressmaker — the wife of one of our senior Greek employees took me to her (speaks only Greek so so far it has been via interpreter but am learning fast there, too),. [She is making me several dresses and suits] so I shall be able to put away my summer things at last. I'm sure glad, too. It is cold as the devil with no heat. With low-quality coal at $50 a ton we're not going to heat the house much but will just wear warm clothes instead. (October 18, 1952)

Over time Eleutheria made me by far the best wardrobe I have ever had. She had an atelier employing seven or eight women; her husband owned a fabric shop; Pat continued to send me material from DeGrand's. Eleutheria didn't need prepared patterns — just show her a picture or draw her a sketch, the final result would be perfect. She made me coats, dresses, suits, evening and hostess clothes, sportswear — everything. Although I tossed quite a few of these in my late-1950s dead funk, I was still wearing some of them in Rome in the early 1970s, and still have a lovely black lace shawl that accompanied one of Eleutheria's Spanish-y evening dresses. I also found a milliner who went to Paris twice a year and bought rights to make hats copying the current couturier models. At about $25 each these were not cheap for me; still I got half a dozen glorious ones. And had a briefcase and a beautiful large black leather bag custom-made from another shop; these were still with me in the late 1970s. Finally, the hairdresser and the masseuse, both of whom came to my house to do their work on me.

At the practical level, then, Greece for me was an odd mixture of serious difficulty (housing, car) and luxury of a sort I have not enjoyed since.

For his part, Robin thoroughly enjoyed Greece — even more, I think, than he had enjoyed India.

Christmas is descending, fast... Robin has two parties to go to, and I've been copped for any number of “small toys — say about $2” —for this and that charity — joyous Noel, and we're getting a tree and all that stuff as usual. His bike arrived by APO — in order to get it here on time they dismantled it and it arrived in three sections (I hope it's three sections — that's all that arrived), and tomorrow a man is coming to put it back together again. (December 12, 1952)

In scouting Robin acquired another major interest:

[He] is mad about Cub Scouts, and the Economic Counselor's wife runs the whole thing and apparently thinks I'm mad about it too. I personally have reservations about the whole organization — remember how you felt about Campfire girls? — but it's doing him no harm and is a help on things like bathing and keeping his room neat. I occasionally have to go to a committee meeting or feed fifteen little boys cookies and stuff like that, but am hardly breaking under the strain. (December 12, 1952)

In fact, Margaret Turkel (the Economic Counselor's wife) and I had the main burden of the cub scouts. Margaret did the programs and supervised the activities. Providing refreshments and other minor tasks were supposed to be taken by scout mothers in turn, but for some reason or other most of the scouts were from military officers' families, and those mothers were very good at worming out of their turns. One, when I called to remind her that her stint was coming up, flatly refused: “The colonel's wife is having a bridge party that afternoon, and I won't have time to deliver cookies to the cob scouts. My husband's career comes first.” Margaret and I, and later Laura Smith, supplied refreshments and doing the other minor tasks most of the time. And Robin was a bit demanding: he didn't want me handing out PX-bought cookies like the other mothers except Margaret and

Laura did (when they did anything at all); he wanted “your good cookies.” So I spent some evenings at cooky-baking. I didn't mind.

The high point of Robin's Cub Scout career was a visit to the (Greek) scout camp on Mt. Olympus, which had been lent to the American den for a week. I that doubt much actual learning and lore went on, but the boys simply loved it. Perhaps for good reason — when the troupe got back and barreled off the train in Athens I had never seen such a dirty, unbathed bunch in my life. Paradise for boys!

Since Robin's school ran from 8 a.m. to noon (no afternoon sessions), in the Spring of 1953 I arranged with Mme. Aspasie Mastradonis, a connection of my landlady Mrs. Dimaras, to lunch with us four days a week, during which I, too, could practice my French, and then give Robin an hour's lesson afterward. Or that is what I thought I had arranged. My French was shakier than I had imagined. For on the first day, after “Madame” had met me at the office and I had driven us both to our house and luncheon was over, and I left her with Robin while I napped. When I got up and came into the living room, Madame pulled out my instruction books from her bag, and I got my French lesson. This arrangement continued for over a year. Madame charged me $17 per month (and lunch), a bargain, I thought. “She speaks no English but after learning Greek from people who speak no English I really think it's the best way.”(May 1953)

Brought up in France where she was born of a French mother and Greek father, and identifying herself as of the “classe moyen”, Madame was an unusually cultivated woman and a strait-laced but truly dear person, devoted to her family and holding to high standards of behavior and achievement for her children. She was a fine teacher. By the time we left Greece Robin had excellent command of French for a child his age. She became genuinely devoted to Robin, as well, and we to her. When in 1954 I went to the States for three week's temporary duty I had no hesitation in leaving Robin in the Mastradonis' care. And it was through Madame and my unexpected French lessons that I became familiar with the great French classics of the 17th through 19th centuries —

most of my reading in Greece was in French. Neither Robin nor I have ever forgotten dear Madame.

I'm already wondering about prep schools — he'll be in 6th grade next year and prep school starts with 8th or 9th. He'll almost have to be in a private one because of his different and more advanced academic background. Even [his] school here, which is way behind his school in India, is a good year ahead of most American public schools. And I think when he's 13 or so he should be in a good boy's boarding school. There are things a woman can't do for a boy as he grows up.(May 1953)

That this school was academically ahead of the typical American public school didn't make it a very good one, either academically or otherwise:

I am still very much dissatisfied with his school, and so are some of the other parents. Of course the big tuition fee adds fuel to our fires. Maybe we can arrange something better next year. (December 22, 1953)

The school's basic deficiencies were all rooted in its in fact being a ghetto school, albeit the ghetto was a golden one. There was no attempt whatsoever to take advantage of its being in the heart of the great cradle of Western civilization; on the contrary, the attempt was to make it into a wholly and perfectly “American” school. This attitude of course extended far beyond the school:

What with American school (which is certainly no prize as a school), American movies, American commissary and PX, American cultural tours and so on, one would think our compatriots wouldn't be scared of contamination... but no, [everything] has to be a completely American show. Of course it's impossible to reproduce exactly the life of one country in another, so what we get... is an exaggeration of our weaknesses and veiling of our virtues, so naturally the people around us think we really are a howling mob of gum-chewing, rough-talking, pushing, comic-book (exclusively!) reading savages.... then

earnest parents wonder why their kids “don't like” their Greek neighbor children, or pride themselves on that fact.(December 4, 1953)

“R. ... has perfect teeth, eyes, everything. What luck! (August 24, 1954). In 1953 some ailment had been diagnosed as mumps, but since he got a real case of mumps later in Chicago, I suspect this was a misdiagnosis, as also, I suspect, was a diagnosis of amoebic dysentery in both of us. If it was amoebic it was nothing like that which I had suffered in Bombay. I rather lost respect for the military's level of health care for dependents and nonmilitary official personnel:

... the dentist (an American Navy one), after having looked at my mouth half a dozen times and not listening to my complaints about general pain in the gums, discovered I had trench mouth — besides amoebic! So he drained the abscesses and put a pack in, and for a week I was going around like a zombie, from the combined effect of penicillin (for the trench mouth), Terramycin (for the amoebic) and codeine (for the pain.).... doped as I was, I had to drive in each morning for the shots, because it is $6. round trip by taxi and could not be considered official business so I could not have a car, and not for any price will a technician come to the house to give the shots. Once at the dispensary, you wait interminably along with everyone els— everything from colicky babies to families smitten with scarlet fever, waiting there right with you.... it is all in what you are looking for whether you decide it's just the d—n foreigners or all of us who do things stupidly sometimes. It does amuse me though when any of the children's diseases assume epidemic proportions that the dispensary sends out urgent warnings to people not to touch local milk or this or that, and then probably wonder why everyone gets it anyway — everyone who visits the dispensary.... I have always used a private Greek doctor before but now decided to take the risks of the “free services.” (August 14, 1954)

Social life is heavier on the purely official side here than in Bombay but not so bad on the unofficial side. I have been to a couple of dinner parties, so life isn't dull, although now I've seen the local night life I can do nicely with very little of it — you know I've never liked the

night-clubby business and much prefer just a good dinner or something. Have also found some good bridge in Athens. (early September, 1952)

...every evening for over a week has been one damned party after another; things I can't get out of, and it will go on until Sunday.... That is the part of this life I like least. (April 20, 1953)

To me official social life could only be characterized as deadly. If brief greetings in reception lines count as meetings, I did meet some notables, among whom I remember Adlai Stevenson and Emperor Haile Selassie. I do not remember meeting any well-known representatives of literature or the arts at these official functions.

April 30, 1953

To: The AmbassadorFrom: Corey B. Sanderson Second Secretary of EmbassySubject: Attached letter

I have just received the attached letter, of which I believe Paragraph 4 may be of considerable interest to us, in case the Embassy has not yet been informed of Mrs. Roosevelt's plans.

/s/ Corey B Sanderson, Second Secretary of Embassy

The letter in question was from the director of the International House Association, who I had met when he was in Mrs. Roosevelt's entourage when she visited Bombay. I was in process of starting an association chapter in Athens. However, if in fact she visited Athens neither I nor the new chapter was included in any of the functions in her honor, for I remember nothing of such a visit.

I especially dreaded embassy parties attended by King Paul and Queen Frederika, and being on excellent terms with Ambassador and Mrs. Peurifoy they seemed to attend most of them. One didn't sit if either the king or the queen stood, and they seldom sat down.

One didn't leave before they did, which was seldom before 2 a.m. — and our office hours began at seven. It was at these functions that I learned to nurse a glass of soda water for hours.

The king was affable enough, but the queen was very much on her dignity except with the Peurifoys, and as I learned to my embarrassment, especially so with juniors. I was drawn by Mrs. Peurifoy into a conversation between them and introduced to the queen. After her “How do you do?” and my murmur, “I am honored, Your Majesty,” some moments of silence ensued. Thinking the ball must be in my court I ventured a pleasantry to the effect that I envied her her recent trip to Germany.

Never before or since have I been so mercilessly and wordlessly snubbed. You see, this was my first brush with royalty, and no one had bothered to tell me of the “don't speak unless spoken to” rule — or for that matter of any other matter of protocol beyond a few forms of address and who ranked whom at table and in reception lines. I wonder if anyone else ever made the same mistake.

And there was a lot of this official social life; my present guess is at least once a week and often more than that. Not only at our embassy, but occasionally at others, and sometimes at the residences of the head of MSA or other high-level Greek, American or other foreign officials.

At least one of these affairs turned out to be amusing, or at least not dreary. It was a dinner party the outgoing head of MSA gave for his successor, who was newly arrived and as yet without his family. I think I was invited only to “make up the table.” While the company dipped their pre-dinner drinks we sat in the drawing room where Mrs. Barrows, the outgoer's wife and very “cultured” in an art- and music-appreciation sort of way, had (so as to shorten the time it would be necessary to make conversation?) put Grieg's A-minor warhorse for piano on the phonograph. As the juniors in the assembly a colleague from the political section and I sat nearest the machine. In the first movement there is

that purling piano section, followed by a short pause and then the crashing descent of octaves. When the quiet part came to a close I misjudged both the length of the pause this especially dramatic rendition of the piece would involve and the acoustics of the room, and whispered “OK, give 'em hell!” This was intended only for my listening partner but carried, in dead silence, throughout the room. The crashing octaves that followed octaves didn't quite drown out the audience's laughter.

Then at dinner I was placed next to the Spanish ambassador. During the main course the guest of honor managed to overturn his glass of deep red wine onto the Venetian-lace tablecloth, a prized trophy of our hostess. She paled, but smiled and not very successfully tried to treat it as Nothing at All. The Spaniard then whispered to me: “Oh, I am so happy he did that and not I. My wife is here and his isn't!”

At another dinner — this may not have been an official one — our Greek host, an enthusiastic hunter, proudly served his twenty-four guests with a huge quantity of larks he had bagged shortly before. After serving ourselves at a buffet we guests sat at rather tippy little tables for four. Larks are tough, and silver-bladed table knives are dull. Sure enough, on my first or second try to cut into the bird it went shooting off my plate into a corner of the room. I was mortified. But my spirits revived as the meal went on and larks began to festoon floor and tablecloths all over the place. In fact the tough larks and dull knives resulted in quite a noisy and festive affair.

I tried to put the best possible face on all these social goings-on:

Social life is getting more pleasant here — the same round of frankly rather dreary diplomatic cocktail parties, but also I'm now seeing some very nice Greeks and British and others, as well as getting to know who are the most stimulating Americans. (September 29, 1952)

Have met some interesting Greeks, am doing a bit of night life, and finding a few bearable Americans among a group which on the whole is about as stagy a bunch as I ever want

to see (the wife on the Independence was a fairly good sample of the appalling average). (November 17, 1952)

This weekend promises to be fairly exciting. Am going tomorrow evening to the premier of a play — black tie — with a character from the office, have a Sunday picnic date, including Robin, with a charming Greek Navy officer and most exciting of all have been bidden to the King's Birthday Ball on Sunday evening. this last is one of the current mysteries around here. Invitations to this — which is the event of the year, is supposed to "make" one socially, and for which Athenians fight tooth and nail — are sent, in very small quantities, to the various Embassies and legations here. We got five, meaning the charg# d'affaires, his wife, and three other people to be chosen by him. It is apparently unheard of for diplomatic people to get personal invitations — but I did, and that direct from the Court Chamberlain. Well, I don't know the Court Chamberlain and don't think I've met anyone else at the Palace, and I am as curious as everyone else about it.... Our protocol officer, an eligible but rather un-fascinating bachelor, gets to go along as my escort and is delighted. (December 12, 1952)

I was also invited to the ball the following year. These birthday balls were interesting as spectacle, the guests being resplendent in white tie and ball dresses, some of the latter obvious Paris originals and the ladies much bejewelled (not all Greeks were poor by any means). I learned to do a decent curtsy for the royal couple. I also observed, on a trip to the ladies' room, that beyond the ballroom and a couple of other public rooms, beyond the elegance of the gorgeously costumed and physically magnificent Evzone guards who stood at its gate, the palace was little more elegant than most Greek domestic interiors: there in an anteroom stood a carelessly groomed and uniformed maid, surrounded by dusty nondescript furniture. Like other Mediterraneans, Greeks spent little energy on the interiors of their houses.

Beyond this, other than the spectacle and the social cachet of an invitation, I have to admit that the balls were little more interesting than official social life in general.

I seem to enjoy a rather extraordinary social position among the rest of the diplomatic corps, the Palace, and that group in Greek society which isn't notorious for running after foreigners (I myself have no idea why all this should be but it is). (January 2, 1953)

Both in India and Greece local people would occasionally say, obviously meaning it as a compliment, “But you don't seem like an American.” At first I resented this, and never became comfortable with it. I was glad and proud to be an American. I did, though, come to see something of what they meant. I was neither like the unfortunate stereotype of the brash or brassy American woman of the movies (and alas not unknown outside them), I felt no need either to fall all over foreigners or to be smarmily, warily “friendly.” They are just people, different from me — but who isn't? Americans or non-Americans, one finds people one feels “right” with and others one doesn't.

I later discovered that the birthday ball invitations, and perhaps much of the rest, had been arranged by a couple of young palace officials whom I had met at some function or other, and who had been much impressed with my eagerness to learn Greek, more and better Greek than one needs with shopkeepers and taxi drivers, and my interest in modern as well as classical Greek drama and literature. They asked me to come along to occasional meetings of a little circle of Athenians and foreigners with similar interests. Though conversation at these evenings was almost exclusively in Greek and French, I much enjoyed what I understood, and the company in general. Later on some of these people took me to a performance of two of the Athens opera (incredibly, painfully bad) and productions of classical plays in the theater of Herodus Atticus. The performers used the classical texts but gave them modern pronunciations. These performances were inspiring to me, and gave me the ambition, partially realized many years later, to learn to read and enjoy the old plays in their original language.

Some of my Greek associations also came about through the Enepekides, our senior Greek advisor and his wife Anna. When I knew them the Enepekides were probably in their late forties. They had a fine son, George, who was a couple of years older than

Robin. John Enepekides had worked for the embassy since long before the war, knew the Greek political scene intimately, and besides being charming was invaluable — I should say the most useful member of the economic section, Greek or American. Anna was simply delightful, sweet, self-effacing, beautiful with her prematurely gray hair. She was enormously helpful to me. It was Anna who put me in touch with my excellent modiste and milliner and helped me with many other practical aspects of life in Athens. The Enepekides gave parties — cocktail parties, dinner parties, at which both food and company — American, Greek and other — were delightful; these parties were fun.

The Enepekides were close friends of the Turkels, with whom I also soon established close ties — tightened by the great friendship that arose between Robin and young Bill Turkel, and by my fondness, which was mutual, for both Harry and Margaret and their children. Bill was a few months older than Robin and Margaret, a couple of years older. Our families saw a good deal of each other. Among other things they came to our house for Thanksgiving and Robin and I to theirs for Christmas, as the younger children and I often did with Porters later.

Harry was a lawyer by training, and I believe that — like Clyde Dunn in Bombay — he had been brought into the Foreign Service by lateral entry (i.e. at a higher rank than that of those who came in, as I did, young and by examination). If so, he was among the best of these transfers I ran across. The Turkels had had several previous posts including, if memory serves, at least one in South America and another in Germany. Harry was thoroughly competent in the substantive part of his work, but detested administrative and organizational details, with results I shall describe later. He was a most pleasant and mannerly man. Margaret was an avid visitor to local sights and the Greek islands. She also ran the American cub scout and girl scout troops in Athens. She spent an immense amount of time and energy on the scouts.

Although towards the end of my tour of duty Harry was saying he had the days counted until he could retire, he in fact did not do so until some time in the 1960s. I think Athens

was indeed his last overseas post. His last major assignment, by which time he had the Foreign Service rank of Career Minister and the diplomatic rank of Ambassador, was the negotiation of the permanent status of a small piece of territory on the Rio Grande that up until then had been in dispute between the United States and Mexico.

Shortly after his retirement he fulfilled a lifelong ambition to visit the last stronghold of his ancestors. He made a trip to Masada, in Israel. On its heights he suffered a fatal, and I think quite unexpected, heart attack. Margaret first learned of this when she got a telegram from the local consul informing her of his death and demanding immediate decision as to disposal of the remains. Heartless, and not something Margaret was equipped to cope with. Fortunately young Bill was then in Saudi Arabia as an oil company executive and could take over.

Margaret spent her last years in Georgetown, with frequent visits to her children, both overseas, and tours of the United States and the rest of the world, always refusing to travel by plane. I saw her several times in Washington, and visited Williamsburg with her. I last saw her in the mid-1970's, when she and I and Brynnie Rowberg, who had been in Athens when we were but by then was also then retired, had a reunion at Brynnie's home in Northfield, Minnesota. After our weekend she and I came to Chicago on the train — not at that time a very comfortable trip (not that air travel was comfortable, either) — and she spent a night with me before going on to her next destination. She died a couple of years later.

Brynnie Rowberg, whom I mentioned above, was a Foreign Service Staff officer at the embassy. I do not remember what her duties were, but one can be sure that whatever they were, they were carried out thoroughly and efficiently. Brynnie never married. Personally strict in her manners and morals, as became the daughter of a pioneer Scandinavian family in Minnesota, she was tolerant of the ways of others and had a marvelous sense of humor. She was also very bright. We have remained in touch over the years, for a long

time only at the Christmas-card level but more recently as fairly frequent correspondents. Her letters well reflect her personality and character. I am always delighted to get one.

The Donners were my other closest American friends during most of the Athens period. Athens was Joe's first post. A little, but not much, younger than I, they were a beautiful and charming young couple, and a rich one. Pam was a Cushing and a Vanderbilt by birth, Joe of a family of Pittsburgh steel-mill owners. This never seemed to matter in the earlier part of our association. Joe and I, neither of us overburdened with work, spent a lot of office time chatting over the delicious cups of Turkish coffee a little man came round with several times during each day. The Donners and I offered each other mutual aid and comfort through those awful official parties. We frequently dined at our house after we moved into the cottage, and Robin and I made many a pleasant visit to their luxurious, but not pretentious, place on the beach beyond Piraeus.

It was there that I had one of the frights of my life when Robin and another guest, a young but grown man, took off for a buoy that looked to be a couple of hundred yards offshore. But they swam and swam, interminably — and I learned that in fact the buoy was nearly a mile out. Thank God they reached it at last, I looking on in agony from the distance. But would Robin ever make it back, after a five- or ten-minute rest? He did, and wasn't even winded.

Possibly because of their exceedingly privileged education and upbringing, the Donners — Joe at least — could be delightfully naive. During one of our office conversations he mentioned that on the previous evening he and Pam had gone with some Greek acquaintances to Chez Lapin, an upscale Athens nightclub/supper club. “One thing odd about Greeks,” he observed, “we saw a lot of older men with younger girls — maybe the men marry late, or maybe it's strong family ties, because the Greeks we were with said the girls were with their uncles.” I burst into giggles and explained what “uncles” meant (”sugar daddies,” in the parlance of the 1930s). Joe was shocked, and disbelieving: “No, that must be wrong. They wouldn't let people like that into the Chez Lapin!”

Some time in the summer of 1953 Joe requested a big favor of me. His sister Carole was coming for a visit. She was passionately devoted to things Greek, especially to things Byzantine- and Crusader-Greek, and she desperately wanted to tour the Peloponnesus. No satisfactory guided tours were available, and Joe was sure Carole couldn't manage that rather rugged experience on her own. Would Robin and I accompany her? Joe intended that we would make the tour in the huge black limousine that the Greek government regularly rented for the use of visiting dignitaries like Marshall Tito (perhaps in addition to being huge it was armored; I don't know), and the Embassy for visiting Senators and such. The car came equipped with a trustworthy and knowledgeable driver. When I protested that there was no way I could finance our share of such an expedition, Joe insisted that that was no part of his plan; I would more than earn our fare by being along, not as a chaperone but as a sort of companion and protector.

After considerable soul searching I accepted this proposal. Carole turned out to be a lovely girl of about twenty, retiring by nature. I liked her very much, and she liked me and Robin. From Robin's and my point of view the trip was a success, offering unforgettable sights and views said to be of significance clear back to the Trojan wars. There were other unforgettable experiences as this enormous vehicle made its passage over narrow, tortuous and thoroughly rutted mountain roads. The driver was careful, but he was also Greek. He could not always resist turning an ascent or descent into a real thrill for himself and something akin to terror in Carole. It was also hot and dusty, the car — and we — covered and caked at the end of each day. But the sights, and the whole experience, were more than worth that.

Except for the Athens area itself and a couple of islands like Rhodes and Mykonos, tourism was not yet developed in Greece. During our several day's wandering around the Peloponnesus we had to depend on the accommodations and meals available wherever we stopped. The places were always clean, but were simple indeed. Washing arrangements included only a basin and pitcher in each room. I am sure Carole had never

missed a daily bath, except possibly if she had been ill. She suffered. Meals were at a similarly simple, sometimes barely edible, level, the main meat item invariable being lamb — on occasion, read goat.

At last, early one evening, we reached Patras, Greece' largest city after Athens and Salonika. There we put up at the best hotel, a modest three-story one fronting on the brick-paved plaza next to the docks. It also looked pretty simple, but it boasted a bathtub. Not private baths or running water in the rooms, but at any rate a bathtub. Patrons could order hot baths; when the bath water was heated and in the tub the patron would be called to come and enjoy. Carole simply longed for a hot bath. Robin and I could make do with sponge downs from the ever- present pitcher in the room. So Carole ordered the bath. About forty-five minutes later a maid announced Bath Ready. Carole gathered up her things and descended from the third floor, where our rooms were, to the ground floor, where the tub room was. She was back in less than five minutes, distraught. True, the water had been heated and the maid had turned on the tub faucet — but she had forgotten to put the plug in the tub, and then apparently made a leisurely trip to announce Carole's bath. When Carole got there all the hot water had drained out! I don't remember how we dealt with this.

By now the evening was well along and we were hungry. Patras being a port we had high hopes for some delicious seafood. On recommendation of the hotel proprietor we looked in at two tavernas (cafes or restaurants), both nearby, both also fronting on the dockside plaza. Neither was exactly elegant, and we saw no other women customers. But we were hungry. We settled on one of them and entered. When menus were presented, they were in Greek. I looked at the list, then asked the waiter if there might be a seafood item as well. No, kyria, only what is on the menu. I looked up an said, “Carole, we can have lamb, lamb, lamb or lamb.”

I think Carole was very happy to get back to Athens next day, though her intellectual passion for things Byzantine and Crusadal had not in itself abated.

On my first visit to the office there was Jim Hewes, the training-class clown, beaming with delight at my arrival. I had not known that he had been transferred from Karachi to Athens. Very much the same old Jim — “poor Jim Hewes” as he invariably became known to the compassionate among his associates. not prepossessing physically, afflicted with “diarrhea of the vocal chords” and without a shred of discretion on any subject including fairly delicate diplomatic matters. One would hear Jim's voice over the chatter at an embassy party, holding forth about the wisdom, or more often the folly, of some American or Greek or NATO, or whatever, policy. All this aside, Jim was bright, he had been educated at the best private schools and at Harvard, he had passed the Foreign Service written examination.

Jim gave me the opportunity for one of my frequent gaffes in the early stages of my learning Greek. We were dining at the Enepekides', seated at tables for four. Jim and I were dinner partners, with a Greek couple making up our table. After the fourth or fifth course Jim announced, in his stentorian voice and terrible accent, “ Zhay manjay trow, Zhay manjay bienne” (”J'ai mange trop; j'ai mange bien”, meaning, “I have eaten too much, I have eaten well.” A bit disgusted, I said, “Oh, isthe yematos.” (”Oh, you are full.”) At which point the Greeks exploded into laughter. They explained: in Greek, only women could be “yemata,” the only word I had yet learned for “full.” Men couldn't become “yematos.” After a good meal one was “hortasmenos,” or “hortosmena” depending on one's sex. After that our table was even more convivial than before, and I have never forgotten either “yematos” or “hortasmenos”.

Jim, the Embassy, and I limped along uncomfortably until Spring 1953, when Jim was “selected out” of the service. Thereafter I saw him every few years, always at his instigation, until some time in the mid-seventies. He eventually got a Ph.D. in history and for some years worked in, I believe, the Army Historian's office. Then we lost touch.

The Smiths arrived some time in mid-1953. Harry and Laura were, I should say, about 40. Both were small blonde mild-mannered people, with two small blonde lively boys spanning

Robin in age. Their house was not far from ours, and what with natural affinity, geographic proximity, our boys' becoming pals and fellow Cub Scouts, and Harry's being no. 2 in the Economic section, we became fast friends and saw a lot of each other. Harry was a Foreign Service Officer of long standing and they had several posts behind him.

In some ways our natural affinity would seem odd. Smiths were thoroughgoing unreconstructed southerners, from Alabama or at any rate somewhere in the deep south. They weren't fond of the memory of Abraham Lincoln. When once I said I'd be proud to shake Ralph Bunche's hand Laura replied, “Well, I wouldn't!” Nor did they have much use for Jews. And while I was anything but a knee-jerk liberal, their politics were down-the-line rightist. But we didn't harp on these differences. There was too much we did have in common, too many things, including a number of excursions and at least one trip, the families enjoyed together.

Occasionally Laura would set me straight. “Corey, you mean you spent your evening last night making date bars for those cub scouts? It's all right for me and Margaret [Turkel] to do that, but you work. You haven't nearly as much time as all those women who send a couple of packages of stale stuff from the PX!” “No, you shouldn't try to let Robin understand you're not perfect. By God, Harry is my kids' father and I make them understand he is perfect!” Not that I had to work at Robin's understanding, I fear.

Harry — I suppose for reasons I shall come to later — left the Service well before retirement age and set up a successful brokerage-investment office in College Park, Maryland. They once had lunch with us in Boise, passing through on a vacation trip to Alaska. We kept touch for many years, and when Willy was an up-and coming young businessman and he and his bride moved to the Chicago area, and Robin a new father doing his M.A. at the University of Chicago, they came for dinner one evening. But again, some time — perhaps when the younger children and I were in Rome — we lost touch.

Among other friends Don Simmons, the American, was an engineer who worked for EBASCO, which was building dams and tunnels in Greece with U.S. foreign aid resources. He was a sweet grandfatherly man, a widower I think, who was fond of me and Robin. That my father had supervised the construction of the Zion highway and tunnel impressed him. Besides being good company to us he did everything he could to help me out professionally, including taking us with him on at least one overnight inspection trip of the works he was in charge of. When we got to the site of the one I remember — a tunnel — he was chagrined to learn that unless he wanted a workers' revolt on his hands I could not enter the tunnel to get a good look at the work. In Greece a woman in a tunnel was bad luck and meant death and destruction, just as women aboard used to be thought bad luck on merchant ships, only more so in the Greek case. I didn't mind. I reminded him I had old and many recollections of a tunnel a-building, and suggested that insofar as the report I intended to write was concerned his own observations and descriptions, relayed to me, of the progress of construction would be more technically accurate than mine. But I was pleased that Robin could go into the tunnel and see the sort of thing his beloved granddad had been involved in. Needless to say Robin was delighted. I spent a couple of happy hours prowling around the site while they traversed the depths.

When I went to the States on temporary duty in mid-1954 Don saw that I met his brother Jack, then protocol officer of the Department of State. I remember Jack as the charming if harassed man who was theoretically in charge of the American side of things during the British Queen Mother's visit, which coincided with my own. He told me that “even when she's sober” he simply couldn't get Mamie Eisenhower to commit to times and places for meetings. Mamie “wanted to 'play it by ear.'” I didn't envy him his job.

An Englishman, Leslie Kemp, made a wonderful dinner guest, and also squired me about to official functions, making them considerably less ghastly. Given his position I would pray that, as seemed usually to happen when I gave a dinner party, the power would go out at the crucial moment. But it never did when he was there. I am morally certain the minions at

the power company kept track of his movements and saw that his way was lighted and his dinner nicely cooked and on time.

Robin and I enjoyed weekends patrolling the Eastern Mediterranean on Kemp's eighty-foot sailing vessel, which he had had made in England and then brought through the French canals to Piraeus. It slept twelve and its crew included a fine cook. Besides staring at the sea bottom, every detail perfectly clear at thirty or forty feet down, and enjoying other nautical recreations, Robin and I could relish quenelles and such delicacies at elevenses, at lunch, at tea, at dinner. In the evenings our host and the other adult guests and I would play bridge or listen to each other's tales of adventure — of which the others had much more to contribute than I had — or just sit and admire the glories of the Mediterranean under the moon.

Andreas Apostolides, the Minister of Agriculture, was in some ways another story:

[He] is in a terrible dither because I haven't got a maid [after Anna left and before Keti appeared]. Apparently he thinks I am going absolutely to break under the strain without a maid for two weeks. Although I asked him what he thought all American women did — he was there for four years during the War — apparently around here no lady is capable of handling things herself. Which suits me fine — there is a good deal to be said for this idea of being a delicate violet. So he said I should just take the first one who comes along, but I won't, but I did promise him I'd bring Robin and have dinner every evening we aren't invited out, and explained I'm not doing any laundry or cleaning anyway! (Jan 20, 1954).

It must have been early Fall 1953 that I met him, for it was at a largish dinner party at Yost's, our Minister Counselor, and we dined on the terrace of their house. By the way, the Yosts were cultivated, well-educated people, not overwhelmed by the glory of their position; their parties weren't purgatorial.

I was seated at a table with Andreas, who an American colleague at the Embassy had previously characterized as “a terrible rightist.” Coming from my informant, and given the

general character of the almost handpicked-by-Americans Greek government of the time, that was saying something. Terrible rightist or not, I found him charming, though at sixty-two he was in my eyes ancient. We got on famously. He must have invited me to dinner or something, because apparently he came to a dinner of mine not long after, and by then I knew that the junior did not invite the senior first.

At any rate, I heard shortly thereafter that he had resigned the Ministry. There then arrived a postcard from him, dated December 6 and bearing a Swiss postmark:

Dear Mrs. Sanderson:

You must have wondered what happened with me. Soon after your dinner party I was taken ill from thrombosis phlebitis rather seriously. I went to Paris and here, and finally I am kept in bed for a month in a very nice hospital in Zurich ... I hope that before Xmas I will be back. I tried your phone before I left but I did not get it and as I was not feeling well I gave up. I will be looking forward to see you again if you also are not very busy.

Sincerely yours,

Naturally, when I learned he had come back to Greece I telephoned him. He seemed most pleased to hear from me. Unfortunately, he said, he was still confined to bed, but he was at home and hoped I would pay him a visit.

Which I did. He was indeed confined to bed, but in pleasant circumstances in his plain house (as I have observed, Greeks don't seem to waste much time or thought on domestic interiors), well looked after by a nurse and a devoted housekeeper of long standing. We both enjoyed my visit. Shortly afterward ensued the every-evening dinners I mention above in my letter to Mama, and our friendship cemented. I took to dropping by once a week or so on my way home from work; his house was not far out of my way. Sometimes I would bring Robin or a woman friend along. Andreas liked Robin and enjoyed the company of pretty women.

He was one of the best conversationalists and story-tellers I have ever met. He described his life and his family in detail. One grandmother was an Englishwoman, who — in the 1870s! — was touring the Ottoman Empire on her own when she met and married his grandfather and then stayed happily in Greece for the rest of a long life. Other relatives and friends had almost equally interesting lives. He himself had been married at least twice — perhaps three times, the limit for Greek Orthodox — but none of these wives was still in the picture. He had two or three children, all of whom lived abroad and to whom he did not seem deeply attached. His stories about his life and his friends, in Greece, in America, and in Europe, were interesting and well told. He had fought with the anticommunist forces in the Balkans and southern Russia during the upheavals after the Russian revolution, he had engaged in a number of businesses, and had long been prominent on the Greek political scene. But, perhaps given my situation and from a sense of delicacy on his part, we didn't really discuss politics, Greek or American. There were too many other things to talk about.

His health of course prevented him from taking up his old Ministry or another one. I remember his complaining of that none of the people at theAmerican Embassy who had been such friends of his had called or shown him any attention at all since his resignation. Were all Americans so cold? Except myself, of course, and I was not among those “old” acquaintances.

After this I made what I hope was a tactful suggestion to our agricultural attach#, with whom I was on good but not personally close terms, that Apostolides would appreciate seeing him and his other friends at the Embassy. As far as I know nothing came of this. People are busy, you know.

At one point he began to feel better. He was no longer bedridden, but sat in an easy chair. He said he would soon resume a bit of social life. On the strength of this I invited him to a

small dinner a couple of weeks hence. At almost the last minute he called: He had had a relapse and couldn't make it. Poor man, I never saw him in that chair again.

After leaving Greece I had two or three letters from Andreas, then nothing. I suppose he died. It was a friendship I value, though as we shall see it also had costs for me.

I also had, rather early on, a Greek suitor of sorts. I met him at an Embassy function. He was of good family and a junior officer in the Greek Navy, and if ever I saw a Greek god in the flesh it was he: of moderate height, well built and with a fine carriage, of that golden-blonde classical complexion (deep-cream skin with plenty of color, dark-blonde hair, heavy-lashed blue-gray eyes), a facial bone structure Pheidias would have immortalized in marble. To be quite frank I remember rather little about his personality or conversation. It must have been pleasant enough.

He gave me quite a rush. Dinners at charming intimate little tavernas, an excursion to Xalchis on Euboea, where at lunch beside the channel Robin and I learned that the numerous “summer hats” floating in the current were in fact big jellyfish, and other outings I no longer remember.

This was all very well, but even then I knew something of Greek customs and exigencies. For this reason I went out of my way to impress on him that I was not monied, not a lady who would bring a dowry into a marriage. It took him several weeks to get this through his head. How could an American woman, a diplomat, who had her own house and accoutrements, including a refrigerator, nice clothes, and so on, not Have Money? He did finally get it through his head. And I saw no more of him. I had known all along that it would be this way, and it didn't bother me. In his circumstances Adrian, no rebel, could not marry a portionless woman. It was fun while it lasted.

There were also quite a few evenings of bridge, scrabble and just getting together, sometimes “just us girls” with women friends, sometimes mixed.

Robin and I are going to the country for a long weekend with friends, and are really looking forward to it (April 8, 1954).

Robin and I and a (girl) friend of mine are off tomorrow for a long weekend at Hydra .... We are going to Delphi soon. (May 28 1954)

How we loved Hydra! Our favorite island. It is really just a mountain top that sticks above the sea. A pretty little town, no cars (no earthly room for them or the necessary roads), our small and plain hotel facing the cobbled waterfront where we could watch the boats moving in and out and the little boys battering squid against the quay to tenderize them, a tiny and utterly private cove where we could swim and Marnie pursue her tan. When we went to Delphi we were almost alone with the few peasants and many ruins, these latter seeming to echo with the oracle's hollow voice. We also went to Olympia (this I think with the Donners), to the great theater at Epidaurus, and a few other places.

Robin and I — just the two of us or in company with others — made many little picnics and excursions in and close around Athens, to sights classical, Byzantine, Turkish. Even more than Rome, Attica is a palimpsest. I especially remember a pristine day at Sunion, the glorious little temple shining like a diamond in its perfect setting of brilliant sky above and clear blue sea far below.

We also did a fair amount of dining out. We especially enjoyed the dockside Piraeus restaurants where one chose one's main course as it swam in the restaurant's tank, and ate with the bustle and life of the port at our elbows, so to speak.

With older friends I learned to enjoy one aspect of Athens night life — the tavernas, where the food might be so-so but the singing and dancing (the latter mostly by men) was unforgettable. Here I got my taste for Greek — and near Eastern — popular music. I hope that music is still popular, and hasn't been run off the road by hard rock and such.

It reminded me of Indian music, and later, when I began to hear pre-Gregorian chant European music, of that.

Here might the a good place for one observation about Greece: when I was there (I of course don't know about now) Greeks fiercely asserted their European-ness, in contrast with Turks, Bulgars, and other “Asiatics.” Yet when they were going on a trip west they were “going to Europe.” And I think the subliminal text was the right one here. Greece gave birth to Western civilization, but — then and since — in its own social mores and general culture and the temperament of its people it has much in common with Asia that is foreign to the West as we know it. And in large part, bravo for that.

Then there was the American Navy. The Sixth Fleet made several visits to the Piraeus during my time in Athens, and all were festive occasions. The officers went out of their way to cultivate the relatively few attractive unattached American ladies (and for all I know some of the attached ones) whom they met. For me there was at least one amusing episode:

The Navy was in town when one late afternoon I sat down at a sidewalk cafe, ordered a coffee in Greek and pulled out my Papastratou cigarettes. There followed a very frank discussion of my various physical charms by a group of Naval officers seated at a nearby table. Just as I finished my coffee an American bus pulled up and out shot a bevy of little boys in cub scout outfits; this was the rendezvous place for them to be picked up by their mothers. Robin came rushing over, full of information about his day's activities, and we took off.

Along with the Ambassador and his lady I was among the embassy people invited to lunch aboard the flagship next day. As we climbed aboard I noticed one of yesterday's officers, a nice-looking one, standing rather pale and discomfited in the reception line. And then, by some coincidence, we were seated next to each other at table. He turned to me: “You

gave me an awful scare! When I saw you coming up that ladder I remembered yesterday afternoon and thought 'My God, that's the ambassador's wife!'"

My other extracurricular activities in Athens were more limited than in Bombay: a speech or two — but with so many Embassy and MSA officers, most senior to me, nothing significant. Almost as soon as I got there I was elected president of the Business and Professional Women's division of the American Women's Club. This election I soon realized was "from hunger": not only did no one else want the job (I didn't really want it myself), but the organization itself was dying. We put it out of its misery a few months later. But not, alas, before a huge group of American club women arrived on a cruise ship and had to be shown around and their arrangements with the few Greek groups of this sort facilitated. All I really remember about this is that I had to preside at a very large dinner — perhaps the final item on the program — at which, and at length, the Americans made suggestions as to what the Greek women could usefully do. The suggestion I remember is an interminably lengthy plea for putting highest priority on establishing a program to plant trees and shrubs along the roads from Athens to Piraeus and other suburbs. I am great on beautification, but here was a country slowly and with a great deal of reasonably well-placed American aid picking itself up from a vicious occupation and a long and even more vicious civil war, full of rubble, poverty, illnesses going untreated and children uneducated for want of resources, women's status in many ways resembling that in nearby Muslim countries — and rich American ladies lecturing their counterparts on tree-planting. Besides, the thing had gone on and on and I had to go to the bathroom. Somehow I managed to bring it to a merciful close.

A few weeks later I almost regretted that the club ladies hadn't scheduled their visit then, when the worst earthquakes in living memory struck Greece. The Athens area suffered only a few tremors strong enough to pull buildings down, and as I recall there were no fatalities there. The Ionian islands suffered most. On his return from a quick visit to Ithaca to estimate the damage Harry Turkel, shock still registering on his face, said he had been with the troops entering Berlin and Hamburg in 1945, but Ithaca was far worse. Thank God

the Sixth Fleet was nearby and steamed in to do splendid work at giving immediate relief, and American government and private organizations also contributed mightily. I felt proud of us then.

All of us Americans at the Embassy had reason to become more or less familiar with the never-ending requests, from relatives and friends, from friends of friends, from distant connections of one sort of another, from people and organizations we couldn't remember ever having heard of, to render special help in doing everything from arranging hastened emigration, or emigration of Greeks whose situations did not exactly fit the American immigration requirements, to getting money and other help to specified Greek individuals and families. I suppose the others treated these matters as I did: we did what we could, which wasn't much, and forwarded the requests to the consular section or appropriate areas of MSA.

Then there were the requests to offer personal help and hospitality to Greek-Americans, friends of friends, who were visiting the Old Country, perhaps for the first time. I vividly remember the Cooper twins, young nieces or granddaughters of an acquaintance of Mama's. They visited me at my office on their arrival, full of enthusiasm. They had their plans made in detail; they would tour the great sights of Athens for a day or two, then take off for the ancestral village somewhere beyond Mt. Olympus. How great to meet and come to know cousins and granduncles and the whole village — everyone in it seemed to be related to them! Three weeks later they were back. They couldn't wait to get on their ship. There wasn't a single toilet, or any running water, in the whole village! People almost never took baths! The food was terrible, and people slept on straw! or a beaten-earth floor. And how those poor women worked, and how badly they were treated! and the Cooper twins and other young girls were watched like hawks. If a girl even flirted a bit, let alone kissed a boy, her reputation was done for. And all the grown women wore black all the time, because they were so often in endless mourning for not only near but distant relatives and usually had only one set of clothes. Terrible! Thank God for America, God's country!

I have thus far said little about my work in Athens. I have wanted to keep this part of the story in one more or less coherent piece, because it was so important in my decisions for my future and Robin's.

On that first day at the Embassy — two days after our arrival — I left official cards for the Ambassador and other senior Embassy people, and met my colleagues in the Economic section. Within the next few days I also met the ambassador, the Minister-Counselor, and the four or five other officers in the Embassy's Political Section, and — though I remember nothing of this — no doubt the officers in its Consular Section.

The Economic Section chief, Harry Turkel, had the rank of Counselor of Embassy. There was also a second-in-command — this post was empty for over a year after I arrived — four other FSO's (Bob Phillips, Joe Donner, Jim Hewes, and myself) senior Greek advisor John Enepekides, three male Greek clerks who handled routine commercial matters, three Greek women secretary-stenographers, and part of the services of an American secretary, who also worked for the political section and who took dictation of and typed our classified material. The agricultural and labor attach#s were Foreign Service Reserve Officers and were included in the economic section, but because they had been detailed to Athens for temporary duty there by their respective cabinet agencies, operated autonomously. Joe and Jim were Class 6 officers, Joe on his first Foreign Service assignment and Jim not having been promoted.

Harry told me I would be responsible for reporting on financial affairs:

I've been humping at the office, trying to get on top of a very complicated subject — international finance is not the sort of thing one becomes expert in without effort! (August 25, 1952).

The work is going along famously; I'm up to my ears in currency, import-export policy, investment policy, oil, and Lord knows what else. (August 28, 1952).

I have the job pretty well pinned down, and can now do a bit of extra studying and so on. (September 18, 1952).Not surprising, because the only specific job I had was to call the Bank of Greece each morning and get the previous day's unofficial gold and drachma exchange prices. From time to time I took care of other very minor matters, unless and until Bob Phillips took them over. Most days at the office became filled in with long chats with Joe Donner and Jim Hewes, and later on with shopping and visits to the modiste. I was emphatically not overworked. The desperate need for me that had precluded any training period in Washington was nonsense. If there had been any rationale at all for rushing me to Athens it was some bureaucratic fear that unless it looked like the “slot” must be filled immediately, it might be lost.

I had been just a bit chilled when Harry remarked when we first met that Patty Byrne, who had had her first post at Athens, was a “crackerjack.” To me “crackerjack” described a fast and accurate typist. That wasn't exactly what Harry meant, but in essence my chill was not ill-taken. For, though Harry was a dear man he had the typical mind set of men of his time about women. He was obviously and unredeemably unconscious of his prejudices in this respect. Patty was not a very good one to precede me either, because she was a sweet, brainy, but humble little girl who was so impressed with having been let into the Foreign Service at all that I doubt she would have noticed if her work had been really that of a sort of glorified administrative assistant.

Bob Phillips had exactly the same rank as I, having been promoted to class 5 at the same time I was, though he had been longer in the Foreign Service. He was ambitious and not very well-bred; his manner of dealing with American and Greek colleagues in the section, except Harry and John Enepekides, was brusque; with other Greeks with whom he had contact it was more reminiscent of a car salesman, or on occasion a bill collector, than a diplomat. It soon became apparent to me that rank notwithstanding, formal work allocation notwithstanding, Phillips was for practical purposes second-in-command. Harry had enormous admiration for his competence (”Oh, no,” I remember thinking to myself,

“not another Belehrad!”) Because of Harry's extreme distaste for administrative and organizational tasks, and his preoccupation with battles with his MSA opposite numbers — and perhaps with personal devils — Phillips ran the Economic Section show.

After a few weeks of this I asked Harry if Phillips actually had his authorization to take over the other officers' work and deal with their opposite numbers; Harry rather apologetically said, “Yes. I depend on Phillips.”

... my colleague and nominal superior is on leave — not far enough, unfortunately; he keeps popping in and sticking his nose in current affairs.... the rest of us can work as a team, but this jerk is really a fly in the ointment. He and I have exactly equal rank, but he got here first and is really bucking for a promotion. I hope he gets the old rodeo treatment instead. (December 12, 1952)

Some excerpts from my responses to questions on a “position description” of December 1952 (such a description for each position had to be filed annually), will indicate, in a muted way, both the level of my work and my feelings about it:

(Q.: “Kinds of work you do”, demanding details):

I edit drafts ... prepared by local employees ... keep this office's records of currency circulation and gold holdings and prices... routine reporting on petroleum affairs...except lubricating oils.... I do not have continuous responsibility for any one subject.

(Q.: “Elements of difficulty”.... A. [in the work itself;B. in public and internal relations required by the work;C.:Initiative and Judgment requirements]:A.: “I do not find any of the above listed work difficult....I refer all problems, except those of a purely routine character, to my supervisors....My work sometimes requires application of the principles and methods of economics.B.: Occasionally I meet American and foreign businessmen and officials.... I deal regularly with no officials, but do maintain regular contact with the secretary to the American member of the Currency Committee [this young woman supplied me with the

daily currency and gold figures mentioned above].... with the [Greek] economic assistants in this Section... editing their drafts and occasionally deciding how a given problem shall be solved. For example, I may have to decide whether to answer a letter immediately or await further information before doing so.C.:....On the whole, the position occupied by me does not require much initiative or independent decision beyond that of phrasing drafts."

I kept hoping. My letters occasionally remark on being "busy at the office." No doubt this was in part my adoption of the local rhetoric. The fact is we were hellishly overstaffed. Everyone was always talking about being ferociously busy. Yet in the economic and political sections of the Embassy, and in those MSA offices I saw anything of, people always seemed to be at leisure. Even Phillips, for all his plum-grabbing and preemption of others' responsibilities, wasn't what I would call overworked. Joe and Jim, who had never had real jobs before, might well take the pace to be "work." Others might just enjoy idleness, or have reconciled themselves to it. But I couldn't. I wanted to work, to show what I could do, and to learn, so that I would be prepared for more responsibility. And, in the Foreign Service or later on, I could never get it through my head, or never accept and play it, that one's real accomplishments were often a good deal less important to one's career than one's ability to thrive in the vomitus game of office politics.

Then something good happened:

I have been working on some rather important things in the office, involving a lot of conferences and things as well as reports. I think the Economic Counselor is beginning to see how ridiculous the situation in this section is, with a talented but immature man of my own rank treating me like a dimwit clerk most of the time. The important assignments are coming straight from the boss now and I have very little to do with the other one. Of course there's nothing personal at all — naturally he wants to make the most of the situation; I also am ambitious and won't let my interests be pushed aside for his. Anyway, I hope this change isn't coming too late. Because I have been quietly encouraging the head of the administrative section, [which had overall responsibility for both the Embassy and the

MSA] who is an extremely competent man and whose ideas on the role of administration in the FS coincide with mine, in the notion that he needs me as an FSO assistant. He is an FSO himself, and like me believes we have to learn this administrative game if we're going to beat it, and keep it from getting a stranglehold over the entire service.... I like the econ counselor very much and have great respect for his competence but I am certainly learning nothing and doing very little, or haven't been until recently. I've just been grinning and bearing it and spending a lot of time loafing and at the modiste's and so on, but you know that isn't what I like.... I don't feel badly about trying to engineer the change because two months ago I told the econ counselor I disliked the setup and if I had to take much more of Phillips' highhandedness was going to ask for a change. He said, as I know, that Phillips is just pinch-hitting for the no. 2 of the section..... well, the no. 2 isn't coming and it looks like the temporary situation may last as long as a year — it's been five months already — and maybe the no. 2 slot will be cut out. So I'm not sneaking behind anyone's back, in doing what I announced I would do if the circumstances remained the same. Everything I have had a chance to do has turned out like a batch of your biscuits, and one or twice I have had to go in and tactfully patch up a mess someone else made of something, so my stock is up around the place, in contrast to the fairly obvious notion of everyone that I was the usual bit of female window dressing the FS has to put up with. They have to put up with me, but not like they thought. (January 2, 1953).

Nothing came of the possible transfer to administration. The “important work” involved plans to devalue the drachma from 15,000 to 30,000 to the dollar. I have no idea why Harry assigned me to help him in the Embassy's role in this. Possibly he knew that though Phillips seemed to be good at trade disputes and such, and didn't mind that he busied himself with all sorts of things assigned to others, and that he had preempted my own supposed assignment to relations with the Bank of Greece and its American aides — perhaps Harry had perceived that for all his “competence”, Phillips could never get financial matters through his head. He couldn't understand exchange rates or their significance for prices or markets or economies in general, or the meaning of balance of

payments and balance of trade and so on. And possibly he found all this just too boring. People who can't understand something often do find it boring.

Anyway, I got the job. And worked hard at it. Of course any plans for a devaluation must be kept entirely dark, or the devaluation's effect will have been dissipated long before it takes place. Harry and I at the Embassy (and the Ambassador of course), a couple of people at MSA, and certain high officials of the Greek government and the Bank of Greece, were the only ones “in on it.”

Imagine my horror at the beginning of one fine morning when into my office strolled Jim Hewes, just arrived and still in his hat and coat, grinning from ear to ear, and saying “Well, well, what's all this about a devaluation?” My God! Who had spilled the beans to Jim Hewes? But “Who” didn't really matter. Someone had. And it had to be stopped. Was there any way to shut Jim up? No one had found one yet. And when had these beans been spilled? How many people had Jim, or his informant, spread the news to already? What did Jim know about it, beyond that it was on the table and that I was involved with it?

I responded to his question by muttering, “Yes, I've heard something about it.” But Jim was not to be put off, as I knew he wouldn't be. He knew, he said, that I was “on the team”, and began to besiege me with questions about specifics and details. From this I could gather he knew nothing beyond the bare fact that the idea of devaluation had been broached and taken up. So I took advantage of the one weapon I had: Jim held me in high regard, idealized me in fact.

First, I had to find out when Jim had learned about this. How many others could be in on it by now? Jim said he'd just heard about it on his way to work. (Could it have been from Harry himself? I couldn't imagine so, but I also had very little to go on with regard to Harry's own discretion. And it didn't really matter Who).

Then I begged. “Jim, for God's sake, PLEASE don't say anything — not a word, don't even let the word 'devaluation' out of your mouth. Don't you see, if it gets out I am the one who

is going to be blamed, because I am a woman and 'women can't keep secrets'? You don't want me fired in disgrace, do you?”

Thank God he did see. And of course what I said was the simple truth. Had it gotten out I would be blamed. Not only am I female, I was the junior member of the team.

As soon as I got rid of Jim I went to Harry and told him about it. I also told him that Jim knew no details of the thing and that I thought he had heard about it almost immediately before he came bustling in to me. And I told him how I had tried to shut Jim up.

Having “covered my arse” and did my duty by telling Harry what had happened, I dropped it. It was up to Harry and the higher-ups to carry on from there. I don't know how they handled it, except that the expected date for the devaluation was rather drastically moved up. And, in terms of our team's expectations for the results, it worked pretty well.

Then things went back to normal. I must have complained again to Harry, for in March 1953 he asked me to give him a memo on the organization of the office and how I thought it might be improved. I began by saying that the economic counselor (Harry) was overburdened, as I think he felt he was. Otherwise the memo was just too tactful. Here are some excerpts:

Largely because of the continuous state of inter-office emergency created by the press of urgent business [!] for at least the past eight months, the work of the section has been handled on a rather “catch-as-catch-can” basis. This was probably necessary for a while, as two of the three junior officers had been such a short time in Athens. But the junior officers in question have been here for 8 and 10 months respectively; if after that time an officer is incapable of satisfactorily doing the work suitable to his rank and experience and/or necessitated by the requirements of the office, he should be replaced. The catch-as-catch-can system, as a permanent thing, is wasteful of time and effort and creates confusion both in and outside the office.

Then followed an analysis of the various aspects of the work of the section and who was assigned to what specific jobs.

“It should be stressed that the above indicates only the system written down in the CERP and usually followed; at any time, on a given topic or general field, one of another officer may take up something in a field not assigned to him. Conversely, there is very little exchange of information or mutual effort on problems falling into two or more subject categories.

Then my recommendations: that the work of the office be assigned according to major divisions, not bits and pieces of each distributed to several officers with ad hoc exceptions taking place without notice to those officers, and that officers be held to responsibility for coordination with colleagues on matters falling into two or more areas.

After having read my memo Harry said he thought it was a good one, but that after all he would rather just “go along like we are going now.” He hated administration and didn't want to be bothered running an office. By that time his own morale, like that of all the others except Phillips, was low and it continued to worsen: he said at our joint Turkel-Venning Christmas dinner in 1953 that he had the days counted until he could get out of Greece and possibly out of the Service.

Phillips was transferred in late Spring 1953. At last “... we're able to do really effective and responsible work.” (May 18, 1953). But it didn't really help. There simply wasn't enough work to do. Shortly after Phillips left Harry Smith arrived as the long awaited no. 2, and Jim Hewes' place was taken by a fresh-faced newly-minted FSO-6. There simply wasn't enough work to keep six Embassy officers and God knows how many MSA people busy on Greek economic affairs.

The ass I was always writing you about, who was finally transferred, got promoted and I didn't.... It makes me furious, because it was simply made impossible for me to show what I could do — in fact I think my attempt to do so worked against me. (May 28, 1954)

Some time later I read in the Foreign Service Journal that Phillips had been awarded some kind of Foreign Service medal for rescuing someone from drowning. Good boy. Several years later Margaret Turkel mentioned that the Phillips's had divorced and he had resigned from the Service.I much admired Harry Smith's cool acceptance of a professional life of leisure. He had another string to his bow: he would sit at his desk all day, poring over the Value Line and other investment services he got through the diplomatic pouch, making charts and graphs, but always ready for pleasant general conversation and office gossip, or the occasional eruption of official business. Harry was an old hand in the Foreign Service. Maybe he had run into such situations before. As a Class 3 officer he had a good income and “as long as he kept his nose clean,” and Harry would certainly do that, little likelihood of not being able to saunter along through a few more posts to a good consul generalship, or even a minister-counselorship, and a pleasant and remunerative retirement.

Harry was not didactic with me, but I think he hoped by example to calm me down a bit, and to his credit he succeeded to some extent. But impatience would get the better of me:

I seem to have a terrific knack for working myself out of a job. Have next to nothing to do in the office and think I will use that as another lever to get out of here. You know I have liked the country but hated the office from the word go, and would give my eyeteeth for a transfer, even a direct transfer, to a really good post.(March 17, 1954)

I have practically nothing to do in the office so attend to my personal business, shopping, etc. with great care and study a lot.... the truth is nobody has enough to do, and we are still frightfully overstaffed. Maybe some people like it that way. (May 28 1954)

Once in a while things were better:

Have been having a good time. 48 rich and successful Detroit businessmen were here on a big junket. Sunday evening the Amb had a reception and [I] had the time of my life. Next day were conference and lunch and so on, and that evening a business dinner, attended by the 48 and about 50 other Greek and American business men and officials, and me.... this went on, one way or another, until Wednesday morning, and the place resembled a real post for a change and not a back-alley army establishment. (May 7, 1954)

I remember only two items I dealt with, though there must have been others. One had to do with fig exports from Greece to the U.S. Now Greece was desperate to increase exports, having a frightening imbalance of trade (the main reason for the devaluation, which did some but not nearly enough good). And unfortunately about all Greece had to export was tobacco that found little popularity in hard-currency markets, olives and wine that weren't international favorites, currants and figs, shipping — and Greeks. So a move was on to increase Greek fig exports to the U.S. Sure enough, who raised up as one in wrath and opposition? The Greek-American fig growers in California, who in another of their manifestations made constant application to the American Congress and Executive to increase aid to Greece, to help Greece get on its feet and become prosperous, &c.

The other was an oil refinery. Oil refineries and air lines seemed to be the great status symbols for what were beginning to be called “underdeveloped countries.” I had had some experience with plans to build an oil refinery near Bombay. When word got around that Greece might have an oil refinery, every oil outfit from the Seven Sisters to types whose prior dealings in oil must have been in the snake variety, every Greek entrepreneur who could wangle an appointment, or preferably a connection, with someone in the Embassy or MSA, and half the Greek government, became obsessed with the thing. All of the “impossibles,” it seemed to me, and a few of the “possibles,” landed in my office, initially at least. Then much talk, much of it pure castles-in-the-air, about capacity and other technical considerations, sources of crude (Greece had none), financing, markets and so on. Maybe

this was the origin of my occasional remarks in letters about being busy. I don't remember if a refinery actually got under way at that time.

In the course of these and other dealings, I learned something. In our training, and in the ongoing rhetoric, it was always stressed that we must hold our cards very close to our vests when giving information during negotiations, while at the same time exerting every effort to get all the information we could. I often found that I had to give very little information indeed — my interlocutors were much more interested in their own affairs than in ours — and that as to getting it, the problem was getting them to stop. Perhaps this had to do with my being a stranger (as people tell their lives' secrets to strangers on trains and plains), or perhaps with my being female. Women couldn't keep secrets but they are supposed to listen and be sympathetic. And given the increasingly miasmic “security” atmosphere in my part of the U.S. government, there was an awful lot of stuff I didn't want to know.

The Narpati contretemps. Early on in India our economic officer (Paul Geren, the straitlaced avid Christian) had introduced me to a youngish Indian newspaperman. I believe he was a “stringer,” not by any means a prominent figure in the world of Indian media. I did not find him either especially useful or at all attractive, more than a little dim in fact.

In India Narpati was at best an occasional nuisance, sending or bringing me useless press releases, trade lists and so on. But when I got to Greece he began to bombard me with letters and telegrams, these becoming increasingly affectionate and including statements of love and proposals of marriage. He said he had a picture of me which I had given him. I had given him no picture, but Paul Geren had taken snapshots during the party at which Narpati was introduced to me and he may have gotten a copy of one of those with me in it. The man had obviously gotten a fixation. I answered none of these missives.

Then to my consternation in September 1953 he wrote that he planned to come to Europe and to see me. This must not be. A stalker at five thousand miles was one thing, on my doorstep quite another.

After some thought I concluded that, uncomfortable as it made me to do so, I must seek help in this. I went to Harry Turkel and to the Embassy security officer and showed them Narpati's letters. I was confident, Narpati's being such a wispy little man, that in a physical confrontation I could hold my own. But naturally I wanted to avoid what would be at best a nuisance and might possibly evolve into some kind of scandal involving me and possibly the Embassy. They fully agreed with me. They would issue orders to the Marine guards that anyone of this name or description was to be told I was out of the country for an indefinite period, that he was not to be allowed to enter the Embassy premises, and that if he did show up I should have some escort in and out of the building. There was little likelihood that he could obtain my home address or telephone number. Then I wrote him a letter, the only one I had ever written him or would write him:

December 3, 195Dear Mr. Narpati,

Your letters stating your plans for visiting Europe, and inviting me to meet you in Italy and suggesting that if I am unable to do so, you come to Greece, have reached me. I have also received a number of letters and telegrams from you since September 1952.

You will recall that we were introduced in Bombay by Mr. Geren, who indicated to me that you were well and favorably known to him and that you and I might find continued acquaintance mutually useful in our respective professional fields. In this connection I once invited you to my house for tea, once accepted a business luncheon invitation by you, and once attended in your company a pleasant evening party given by your Indian Navy friend and his wife.

Such social contacts among professional acquaintances are common throughout the world. They do not reflect more than ordinary amity among the persons involved. When, on the occasion of the evening party referred to above, I suspected your interpretation of the situation was different from mine, I regretfully but immediately and firmly decided against continuation of our acquaintance. Your next invitation to me being of a non-professional nature, I declined, and subsequently, when pressed, I informed you of another personal commitment on my part. There was no need to so inform you, but I felt that to do so might accomplish more easily and gracefully the discontinuation of our acquaintance. The fact that this commitment no longer holds does not in any way alter my position with regard to the possibility of a renewal of any kind of a relationship between us.

I had hoped that, when your letters and telegrams to me remained unanswered, you would realize that I do not wish to see you or entertain your suit and shall not do so, but apparently I was mistaken. I shall not see you in Rome, in Athens, or anywhere else. I regret very much having to take such a bald and uncompromising attitude, but it seems to be necessary now.

Best wishes for your other plans, and for your futurhealth and happiness.

Sincerely yours,

I did not hear from Mr. Narpati again. But the story continues: somehow the CIA got in on it. One day I was summoned to their head honcho's office and gently grilled on this association. I showed the H.H. Narpati's letters to me and mine to him. I told him our conversations had involved only matters of local trade and economic interest in Bombay at the time, and the usual desultory social exchanges of remarks. I could tell the CIA nothing more, except that as far as I knew Paul Geren and myself were the only consular people Narpati knew in Bombay; perhaps Check, as a member of the Press, also had a nodding acquaintance with him.

The CIA expressed concern that Narpati might be some sort of agent. My retort was that the man was obviously off his rocker, and that not in a way likely to be of use either to India or to some other foreign Power; he was more to be pitied than investigated. I hope that headed them off. Poor Narpati.

Thus we come to the second source of my discontent with Athens and the Foreign Service. “Security” issues in one form or another had become prominent with regard to the State Department and the Foreign Service long before I got to Athens, as the Belehrad episode shows. Many in the Service blamed Truman for some of the follies and excesses of all this. I should say that most of the Foreign Service people I knew, except possibly one or two of the younger among them, voted for Eisenhower in the 1952 election and welcomed the change in Administrations. Not just because of the “security” business; the Foreign Service was on the whole quite conservative, many of them long uncomfortable with New Deal policies of all kinds.

Well, we got Eisenhower. We also got Dulles, Scott McLeod and their ilk. Immediately after the election the drums began beating for drastic reductions in force in the Service. I myself would welcome this per se; as I have indicated I thought our foreign establishments were grossly overstaffed.

But the way these “rifs” as they came to be called, were accomplished, insofar as they were accomplished, and the grounds on which many of them were made, made the cure worse than the disease. As far as I could see the firings were invariably firings of the most vulnerable, not of the least useful. For example, the Vienna embassy at one time was left with thirty-six officers and not one American secretary to do their classified clerical work. I suppose some of the officers learned to type.

The Service is in a very bad way right now. A lot of people — some have been in for 25 years — are being summarily fired on 30 days' notice. It's all been staff corps so far [at the Embassy] but there's talk of speeding up selection-out procedures for FSOs, too....

Much as I feel we need drastic reduction in staff, I can't think doing it this way will help. Apparently the system is to decide that certain jobs are unnecessary and just fire whoever happens to be in them at the moment. Result: a lot of good people are let out, and our real bottlenecks — asses who are in essential jobs (like George Small) — remain to assure the works' being gummed up in future. Also, since people don't know, when they go out to lunch, whether they'll be working that afternoon or not, very little work gets done. In one case a man had been on home leave and was embarking for the next post when he was urgently called to Washington. He put his wife and children on the boat, went back, had some conferences and was talked into flying [to his post], where on his arrival he found he had been fired. He had of course had to go into debt to outfit the family for the new post and can't recover any of it. Other cases are almost as gruesome. I have seen a lot of things I didn't like in the Service, but up to now I've thought we must put our shoulders to the wheel or else leave the Service to the little foxes. Now I'm beginning to think that a career spent abroad, which is hellishly expensive and where if you happen to have a responsible post during one Administration you're likely to get the boot in the next, despite being a “career officer” without political ties, is a pretty sad story. And we may as well not kid ourselves that we're able to do really effective and responsible work. When I get home next time I'm definitely going to look around. This is very little if at all more “secure” than private business; it carries less prestige; no one admits you earn your keep. (May 18, 1953)

Overhanging all this was the implication that by definition people in Foreign Service were of doubtful loyalty to the United States. Sen. Joseph McCarthy was in his glory. And seemingly no stone was left unturned. Casual acquaintances from years ago, if they were suspect, made you suspect, too, as did quite accidental family ties. I occasionally wondered if Uncle Gaby, by then a confirmed rightist and supporter of Whitaker Chambers in the Hiss trial, and his Spanish-War past connections might not become a cause against me. The Embassy's security officer was now joined by two more. No reduction in staff there.

....everyone has to fill in complete new security forms; addresses of every place you've lived since 1937, all associations, etc. So don't be surprised if the FBI calls on you again. To the best of my knowledge there have been three full investigations on me already. So with all the other [FS people]. Naturally, one's friends begin to think there must be something wrong, after being queried four times in seven years about what I was like at age 15.... The practical aspect of the gimmick is that no one can be promoted until the investigation is complete. So almost no one has been promoted for over two years because of these interminable investigations. (April 5 1954)

Aspects of this “security” and the antics of its operatives could be amusing. A fresh-cheeked young Irishman with a newly minted Georgetown degree was one of our expanded security staff. He was at a party at Brynnie Rowberg's one evening when Brynnie showed her guests her mirror-ceilinged bedroom. The pretty little house had previously been the residence of a mistress of a cabinet minister. Brynnie, who had been posted in Italy and France, began to expand on similar phenomena there when our new colleague, scandalized, broke in: “Well, the Catholics in those countries certainly don't act like that!”

It was less amusing when Marnie Wiesender, a close friend, telephoned me at my house one evening. Through the static occasioned by a poor telephone system overburdened by taps variously installed, I suspected, by the Greek, the Russians and the Americans, I could gather she was agitated. She had been to a party of mine recently, as had one of his security colleagues. He had visited her at her office that afternoon, wanting to know all about me: my past and present, whom I knew, what were my interests and hobbies, where I traveled, and so on. He let slip that he had noticed not one, but two, books by Karl Marx sitting on my bookshelves. Even one would have been one too many.

Nor was it amusing that an order went out that all local employees must be out of the Embassy building by five minutes after closing time, and none could come in and work after hours or on Sunday. This included John Enepekides, who on occasion worked

practically round the clock, to the great advantage of American policy in Greece. When I saw him being escorted out of his office in none too courteous a manner shortly after official closing time one day, when for some (surely unique!) reason was I also was staying late, I drew one of the Marine guards who was doing the escorting into my office and expostulated with him: Mr. Enepekides and I were working on an urgent project, Mr. Enepekides had been a loyal employee of the Embassy long before he, the Marine guard, was born! The reply: “How do I know he won't pull a gun on me when I come in on my rounds?” I don't remember my response. Perhaps I was rendered speechless (also a near-unique phenomenon). The order stood for some weeks, until the Ambassador himself canceled it.

When I was instructed personally to go through every sheet of onionskin and other paper in the bulging four-drawer file cabinet that sat in my office and sort out all material marked “Restricted” and “Confidential” (higher classifications were kept elsewhere), so that the security people could have a look at them, I rebelled. I pointed out that such a job would take whole weeks, that this stuff went back to when the Embassy was reopened in 1945, that a lot of people simply went berserk with the glory of being able to stamp papers with security classifications, and that I would eat my hat if my safe contained anything any spy would find useful, let alone be a piece in a security jigsaw. I didn't add that the likelihood of these security types understanding any document having to do with trade or finance was next to nil. Somehow this project was given up, and somehow (I think) I escaped serious “security” notice.

Perhaps putting up a good stiff fight was the secret. When “the gold dust twins,” Roy Cohn and his cute little sidekick Schine, arrived in Athens to sound of trumpets and beating of drums, everybody was scared to death. Even Marnie, who confessed to me that she had actually fallen so low as to answer one of their queries by saying she was sure Sen. McCarthy had only the good of the country at heart. They did not visit me, so I was spared. But they did visit the USIS library and demand to see a complete list of its holdings and to order anything they found objectionable removed. Whereupon the librarian, a tall ramrod-

straight Irish Catholic puritan lady of about fifty, told them exactly where they could go if they expected to remove any of “her books.” The gold dust twins backed down.

The worst was yet to come. Remember, this was only a few years after we “lost” China. Anyone was automatically suspect who had been posted in China before we were booted out and the two countries proceeded to spend nearly twenty-five years trying each to pretend the other didn't exist. One of these was Harry Smith. Harry Smith?! Yes, Harry Smith, down-the-line rightist, unreconstructed southerner, enthusiastic proponent of and substantial investor in the capitalist system, Harry Smith.

In Spring 1954 Harry was called to Washington for “consultation.” Read grilling. He was still there, and Laura and the boys still fretting in Athens, when I got there on temporary duty in summer. Needless to say I and everyone else in the Embassy had been minutely questioned about Harry and every remembered contact and conversation we had had with him. When I saw him in Washington I was delighted to see he was still the cool, collected, understating man I knew. He finally was let go and went back to Athens, where he finished his tour of duty. But that was his last one. He resigned on their return to the States, and set up his investment business.

Also during that brief tour of duty, I had a message waiting for me one evening when I got back to my hotel. I should immediately call no. such-and-such, no name or agency. Which I did, and got a twanging male voice that sounded about eighteen years old. “They” wanted to know about so-and-so. I had never heard of so-and-so; who was she? They couldn't say, but she was posted in Athens. Was she at the Embassy or at MSA?, I asked. I didn't know all the American employees of MSA by name; if she was a clerical person I probably wouldn't. I might know her by sight but not by name; in other words, I might know her but not know that I knew her. How long had she been in Athens? Three weeks, he replied. Good heavens, I said, I've been in the States myself for two weeks. It's highly unlikely I would have met her in her first week there unless she was an Embassy officer, and I'm the only female Embassy officer there! Surely if she were an Embassy or MSA

employee, however lowly, they would have run a security check on her and have other and better informants than I! “Yes, but she was in China!” Well, I have heard other non sequiturs in my time.

I wonder how many genuine subversives, hidden by all the dust being raised, were able to continue their work indefinitely. And I remain convinced that real subversives in this country had no better friend than Sen. Joseph McCarthy.

And what, meanwhile, were our leaders — the Secretary of State, the highest ranks of the Foreign Service, for that matter the President himself — doing to defend the Service? Nothing for quite some time, in the case of the President. The Secretary of State and his minions seemed actually to delight in the attack. The rest, it seemed to me, just figuratively lay down on their backs and asked to be kicked again.

In late 1953 I enrolled for a correspondence course in investment banking. Harry Smith had suggested I do so when I expressed an interest in “stocks and bonds” to him. It was a good course in corporate finance, using Graham and Dodd as a text and therefore stressing the “value” orientation toward securities evaluation. Harry kindly lent me some of his voluminous material on individual companies, and I also called on Mama for help in getting me copies of annual reports and so on so I could make the required analyses. After finishing this course I took one in brokerage procedure; these two courses made me eligible for licensing as a registered representative of the New York Stock Exchange. I was trying to add strings to my bow.

I've been trying to work on French and the investment banking course, not going out a whole lot, but just seem to get caught up in so many trivial but essential things. (December 4, 1953)

Things are so much better in the office. It is hard to describe the internal politics of an office, but as you know I've been most dissatisfied in Athens. Now, personnel is leveling off to a reasonable number; I have lots to do and carry a bit of weight.... I simply hate it

when I just have to sit around waiting for the pay check. However, I am quite serious about looking around when I get home.(December 22, 1953)

I also tried to get support for the idea of my being sent to Harvard or elsewhere for a year's specialized training in business and finance. I was not especially interested in specializing in any particular field of Foreign Service work, but this would get me back to the States and in a position to survey the terrain, and I knew from observation that if I did stay in the Service such specialized training would not necessarily mean I would be forever stuck in it. But there were hurdles. One was the new Ambassador, Cavendish Cannon, a longtime veteran of the career Foreign Service who had replaced John Peurifoy when Peurifoy was transferred. Mama was much impressed; it turned out that Cannon was of an old and rich Utah family and that Mama had known him slightly when she was a student at the University of Utah, “although he was much older than I.” Charles Yost, the Minister-Counselor, had also been replaced, by Charles Mann.

The Counselor, who will still recommend me for Harvard training, is leaving, and Ambassador Cannon isn't too thrilled about people always going to school — especially at Govt expense — believes one learns more on the job. So do I, but I've not hesitated to point out to him that it was not Uncle Sam who educated me so far. But when it comes right down to it [my] idea of Harvard or any State-side assignment is to build up contacts and so on. So maybe instead of that I'll try to get a transfer without leave, if I can get Paris or London, where things really do go on. Greece is lovely but one is really off in a corner. (December 22, 1953)

Then came the Foreign Service inspector's visit. These inspections were primarily concerned not with “security,” but with the effectiveness of the Embassy's organization and operations and the quality of its personnel and their suitability for the work assigned to them.

I've been quite frank with the inspector, because they won't fire me for being as unhappy with the service as most people are, if for different reasons.... Fortunately it turns out the inspector and his wife have two girls, 18 and 21, and are in process of starting them out of careers so are very interested in the whole angle of women in careers, are going to Korea, on which I worked in the Dept., are interested in archeology, mathematics, music and a lot of things I'm interested in, so we have a good deal in common and have spent perhaps more time together than we would, my being a junior officer, under other circumstances. The Ambassador has changed his mind about advanced training for me; thinks my work justifies it and the Service needs highly trained economic and financial specialists, so will recommend me for school. So the application is all in and now it is up to the Department. This of course is a big hurdle but at least some people, including the Economic officer for Near East and African Affairs are for it there, too. (8 April 1954).

Had some rather illuminating discussions with the inspector. On the school business he asked if I would feel an obligation to stay in the Service if the Department gave me the year's training. I said yes, definitely, but that if after having given me all that, the Dept. sent me off to clip newspapers in Dacca, I would naturally wonder. I am sure he and the Ambassador talked about this application so apparently they see that neither my own interests nor those of the Foreign Service have been well served by this two-year sitting marathon I've been forced into (19 April 1954)

But in the end, all for naught. The application was never acted upon one way or the other. And the inspector's report noted only that in his opinion I needed “more supervision.” Dear heaven! Who had tried so hard to get Harry to exercise some supervision of the Economic Section?

The final straw came in Spring 1954. About nine o'clock one morning I was sitting in my office when Andreas Apostolides called. He had never called me at the office before. He

asked me if I could possibly run out to Psychiko to his house; he would rather talk to me in person than on the phone.

Having no particular business I took off. When I got there he said, “I wanted you to have this information because it may do you credit with your people. Markezinis and Papagos had a big quarrel late last night and Markezinis believes Papagos impugned his honor, so Markezinis resigned and the whole Government is in confusion. No one knows about this yet, but it will be announced on the radio at noon. I thought your Embassy would rather not be surprised.”

Indeed they would rather not. For all practical purposes the U.S. had put that Government together. It was the first since the War to last more than a few months. Prime Minister Papagos was a war hero, now verging on senility but nonetheless an icon to all except the most leftist Greeks. Markezinis, for whom a new office, Minister of Coordination, had been invented, was a brilliant politician, competent in governance, ideologically correct. He was the real Government, and the mainstay for American policy in Greece. His resignation in heat portended all sorts of difficulties, but best at least not be caught unawares. (I had known, vaguely, that Andreas, bedridden though he was, was still in close touch with leading figures in Greek politics, but, as I have said, he and I had rarely discussed such things).

I rushed back to the Embassy. Harry Turkel was out of his office. The Ambassador was out of town; the Minister Counselor could not be disturbed, even on urgent request, by a junior officer in the economic section. Nor could I see any of the other three middling-to-senior political officers. Finally I did see Phil Axelrod, the junior officer in the political section, who held the same rank as I.

I told Phil what Andreas had told me, and the source. Phil simply didn't believe it. Apostolides had been out of the Government for months, he said; how would he find

out such things so soon? At best it was one of those rumors that were constantly being manufactured in Greek circles. Forget it.

And so, at noon, came the announcement on the radio, and the Embassy caught with its pants down.

A day or so later our senior security man marched into my office, eyes narrowed, looking as if he had caught the spy of the century. “How come you know Apostolides so well? Are you sleeping with him? What have you been telling him about the Embassy's business?” and so on.

I was indignant, but managed to control my temper. I said I had met Apostolides at Yost's several months before; that he had invited me to a semi-official function and I had returned his invitation by inviting him to dinner with the Turkels and some others of appropriate rank and a Greek couple we knew in common; that shortly after that he became ill and resigned his Ministry, that after his return from treatment in Switzerland I had called on him and since then had done so every week or two, sometimes alone and sometimes in company with my son or one or two American friends; that he had been very kind to me and my son and that I regarded him as a personal friend. As for sleeping with him, I would put that insult aside and simply ask if my interrogator thought a sixty-two-year-old man bedridden with thrombosis phlebitis would likely be up to such activity. I said that though Apostolides and I seldom discussed Greek politics and never American policy in Greece, I was not surprised that he had learned of the Markezinis resignation shortly after it took place. He had long been a major player in Greek politics and naturally was very well acquainted with high Greek political figures, and I thought he still entertained hopes of recovering his health and reassuming an active role in Greek politics. Apostolides had expressed disappointment that his American official friends, except myself, had to a man dropped him when he resigned his post; among other reasons for seeing him I wanted if possible to leave an opening for the old friends, or new ones, should he in fact again take

up a Ministry. Furthermore, I said, I had made no secret of our friendship, although I had seen no reason to name-drop in this connection.

The “rather extraordinary social position among the rest of the diplomatic corps, the Palace, and that group in Greek society which isn't notorious for running after foreigners,” that I had boasted about to Mama had had, it seemed to me, no effect for good or ill on my position in the Embassy. It had yielded me no great advantage for my own work, for these people rarely talked shop, most were not seriously interested economic affairs other than, presumably, their private ones, and in any case, had they wanted something from the Americans, junior as I was I could have been of little interested use to them. Nor had I heard any remarks around the Embassy, for good or ill, about these associations of mine. Except once, possibly, when a middle-ranking officer in the political section had casually remarked on his curiosity about my links with the Palace staff, and I had responded that some of them were kind enough to help me in my attempts to learn and appreciate Greek drama and literature. At the time I had not taken this as an unfriendly query.

How wrong I was! Those invitations to the king's birthday balls were a black mark. They and my other Greek and non-American diplomatic associations had become a source of real resentment in the Political Section. I found there was also curiosity as to how I “came to be so thick with the Papandreous” and Leslie Kemp. I have described the Kemp association above. I was not “thick” with the Papandreous. They did seem to enjoy chatting with me, as I with them, at Embassy and other functions. Being elderly and not in the best of health they did not themselves entertain much. The only time I had visited their house was at dinner where I was the only guest (and aside from enjoying myself very much learned the great pleasure of fresh figs in heavy cream).

From a career point of view I would have done much better to have lived almost exclusively in the circle of available Americans, as did most of my junior and some of my senior colleagues, limiting my social associations with Greeks and other foreigners to the formal amenities of official life, but of course being careful to invite at least one to

parties so I could collect on my representation (entertainment) allowance. How different from Bombay! but that didn't help. But there was nothing I could do about it now, in fact, nothing, except possibly the birthday-ball invitations (those balls I could have dispensed with), that I could regret. Life is short.

Of course I never mentioned or hinted at any of this to Andreas or the other friends in question, or for that matter to almost anyone else. One does not broadcast ones's disgust with and shame for one's colleagues or a family member. I did tell Harry Turkel about it (Harry Smith was then in Washington being grilled himself); if I was a liability he had a right to know it, if he didn't already. He didn't, and he seemed almost as pained as I was.

But I was indignant, and given the other frustrations of the past two years decided that I had better find another career. Given the example of the last year and a half, any demagogue, of either party, who came looking for something to attack had a ready-made target in the Foreign Service. Given the supine reactions of high officers of the Service, and of the Administration as a whole, how could one hope to accomplish anything of real worth for American policy or American interests?

I had already made some tentative inquiries, and now intensified them. I wrote to various corporate and banking people I had helped in India and Greece. But the business world, except for fashions and such in which I had neither interests nor training, and except where the woman had family or other connections with the business, seemed closed to women above the clerical level.

Not without a battle, I managed to wangle myself a four-week duty in Washington, as Embassy Athens officer to accompany a group of Greek officials who are coming to the US to study export controls and related problems.... Unfortunately I can't take Robin, but he is going to be well looked after [by] our French teacher [and her family]. (June 6, 1954).

Export controls had to do with the U.S. policy of prohibiting export of strategic materials and technologies to the Soviet Union and its satellites. If this policy was to be effective,

other countries — our allies and clients — would also have to prevent export or transshipment of such materials. It was a long list, for “strategic” covered many items of primarily economic rather than military use. Military might rests on economic capacity.

I had been working with the various relevant Greek ministries and other agencies on this subject for several months, since Phillips was transferred. Four Greek officials, senior civil-service people in some of these Greek agencies, had been invited to the U.S. to study ways and means of making export controls effective. None of them spoke more than a few words of English, though all had some reading knowledge of it. I had worked with all of them on the export-control item. In our dealings we had usually dispensed with an interpreter until close reading of final texts was in question. My work had occasioned some mildly congratulatory comments from U.S. offices in Washington.

The assignment was apparently considered something of a plum. “The battle” had to do with whether or not I was a suitable person to accompany the Greek officials (all male). I first learned of this when Chet Yowell, a newly minted FSO-6 on his first post who had been in Athens for two or three months and was assigned to the economic section, and with whom I was on the same friendly terms in the office as I had been with Joe Donner and Jim Hewes, told me that Thomas Mann, the Minister-Counselor, had asked him rhetorically what he thought of the idea of sending a young woman as Embassy officer accompanying these people. At least, Mann thought, the accompanying officer should be male (a “real Foreign Service Officer”).

Much as I hated to bother Harry Turkel with details like this, given his detestation of battles other than his own with his MSA counterparts, I did go to him. Who, I suggested, should go in my stead? Harry Smith might have been a good possibility, but he was already in Washington, his time being absorbed by endless exploration of his career in China. Only Yowell — nice and potentially competent but still utterly wet behind the ears and knowing nothing about export controls — and I were left in the Economic Section. Should an officer from the political section be sent? All of them no doubt knew the general outlines of our

export control policy, but none of them had worked directly on it. If they had met any of the four officials in question it would have been brief contacts at official functions. None of the political officers knew more than enough Greek to hail a taxicab.

To his credit Harry went to bat for me with the ambassador, and the matter was closed. My own primary interest wasn't the prestige of going to the U.S. on this mission. I would be able to have a much-needed free weekend in Paris en route, some time in New York to explore possibilities in the securities business, and could arrange four or five days' leave in New York after the Greeks' visit was over. I might even have some opportunity to visit people I knew in Washington and possibly find ways and means of getting posted there soon, or a direct transfer out of Athens. I wanted to get out of that Athens mess!

And off I went. The Paris weekend started badly. I got there in mid-evening and went to the hotel our administrative people had put me up in. Its costs was within our minimal travel allowance standards. It was also, as I learned immediately, filthy, and, as I learned after an hour or so, a house of assignation of some sort. I spent a restless night hoping the skeleton-key-locked door, which looked fragile enough, would protect me. It did, though there were some loud and importunate knocks on it, accompanied by a lot of French most of which I didn't understand but did understand that it was obscene.

I had arranged to meet two IBM men headquartered in Paris, who when I had been of some help to them in Athens had warmly invited me to visit them should I get to Paris, but had not known the hotel's address until immediately before I left Athens. So next day I called one of them. He seemed a bit shocked when I gave him the address, and when he and his colleague came to get me they simply said, “You can't stay here!” So I packed up and they put me up at Rafael's, which was probably the loveliest hotel I have ever stayed at. When I demurred about hotel bills they assured me (I hope they were telling the truth) that it would all go on the expense account. Then they took me to lunch at “Le Coq Hardi,” a charming restaurant in the country, then to dinner and of all things the Follies Berg#re, just for fun.

Next day, Sunday, lunch in the Bois de Boulogne. I rather wanted to go to the Louvre (this was my fist visit to Paris), but I could tell they wanted to see the races at Auteuil. So I kept quiet about the Louvre. Auteuil itself was great spectacle: magnificent weather, beautifully dressed people in the enclosure, and so on. Despite having a grandfather who had kept racehorses I was entirely ignorant of everything about the sport. I refrained from betting until the last race. Then I placed a small bet on a horse whose jockey's lavender outfit caught my eye, but which otherwise had nothing to recommend it; it was long, long odds. But it came in! I don't remember if it came in first, second or third, but I won what seemed to me pots of money. Naturally I insisted on standing the three of us to lots of champagne with dinner, and rather felt as if I were being poured onto the plane when they saw me off for New York.

That plane was something I never experienced before or since — a Pullman plane! It was some time before takeoff, but here was my lower berth, all made up. I made my toilette and climbed in. Then, being slightly sloshed and also in euphoria, I ordered a highball. I had a sip or so of it, put it down “temporarily” on the floor, and conked out.

When I awoke the plane was again stationary; we had landed in New York but there seemed to be no rush about debarking. My first thought was “Horrors! I left that drink, full, on the floor; what a mess it will be!” But when I reached down, not a drop had spilled. How's that for a smooth ride, and a great weekend?

I should say here that I believe my IBM friends were married, but their families were not with them in Paris. This may have been IBM policy at the time. Two more perfect gentlemen I have never met, and few who matched them. They were simply grateful for my help in Athens and perhaps also enjoyed my company. But as I also learned it was also categorical though unspoken IBM policy that no females other than clerical were eligible for employment.

My charges' plane arrived at the airport about an hour after I did. So I bought a Sunday New York Times and settled down at their gate to wait for them. When they debarked and we had finished our greetings I asked them if they would like to see a New York newspaper. One of them said, “But Mrs. Sanderson, you didn't need to buy a paper for each of us!” Newspapers in Athens ran four to eight pages.

There we were also joined by the American project manager, an official from the Department of Commerce, and later, for meetings, by an interpreter (my Greek was not up to simultaneous interpreting), and we took off for Washington, for five days filled with meetings, followed by a long fourth-of-July free weekend and four days' meetings in New York, then back to Washington for two weeks' more meetings. Some of these meetings were ceremonial functions, some were really quite useful, and some, unfortunately, reminded me of lectures in the Foreign Service training class by people who were supposed to tell us about their work and how they did it but never could quite get beyond vague generalities. Some of my notes indicate the negatives of these last: “confusion between license and declaration”; “certificates — all exports? what is the use of IC where DV is not required?”; “physical inspection: not sufficiently careful”; “overlapping jurisdictions”; “a lot of the discussion and the suggestions are internal, not applicable to Greece; why bother with these?”; “the inscrutable occidental mind.” But none of our guests had visited the United States before, and they were no end impressed with New York and Washington, the sheer size of things and our government, and so on. That was probably a plus. And we got on very well. They spent their evenings and other free hours either at their Embassy, in Washington, or their consulate, in New York, and with friends and relatives. I think all Greeks must have friends and relatives all over the U.S.! I spent my time after hours seeing old friends and just resting.

There was some time — not much — in Washington for me to visit appropriate offices in the Department of State and make inquiries about my top-priority subject. I found

morale at State fully as dismal as it was in Athens, and I made no headway with new post assignments.

On my four days' leave in New York at the end of the official visit I visited the New York School of Finance, from which I had been taking the courses in investment banking and brokerage procedure, and several brokerage and securities firms. Here at last it seemed I had struck pay dirt. Two or three of them were interested, and Goodbody & Co. made me a firm offer. I think they had their head office in mind, but at my request they accepted me for their Charlotte branch. I feared I couldn't make Robin and me a decent living in expensive New York; I thought Charlotte a pleasant place, close to family (my sister had her husband and children) but not so off-the-earth as Boise. The people at Goodbody seemed puzzled by this preference, but they agreed to it.

I got back to Athens at 1:30 a.m. I had some classified documents in my briefcase. Since I had been carrying them around for over twenty-four hours — a State Department man in New York had given them to me before I left, for delivery to the Embassy — I could probably just have taken them home with me and brought them to the office next day. But I was uncomfortable with them, and wanted them in my safe as soon as possible. So I had the taxi stop at the Embassy. The Marine Guard knew me, but wouldn't let me in; he had orders not to let anyone in. I said I had some classified documents and wanted to put them in my safe so I could get a good night's sleep at home. No soap. So, for the first and last time, I pulled rank. I had the “assimilated rank” of major and told him he would regret it if I didn't get in to put my documents away. He folded, and I went home. Next day I went to work, collected Robin, and got back to normal.

I sent in my resignation in early August, saying I was leaving the Foreign Service for personal reasons. Then someone — the security officer? or who? I don't remember — brought back my letter. I wouldn't be permitted resign for “personal reasons.” So I drafted another letter, in which I said that given the current and probable future direction of the Department and the Service, I thought I was not a suitable person to be a Foreign Service

Officer any longer. I remember the sad look on Ambassador Cannon's face when he read it. Perhaps he agreed with me.

As for our plans — we are keeping busy with shots and red tape. R. is doing a lot of French, and I am studying hard on my courses. Rani had 3 perfect Siamese kittens last night; if one if them is a male we'll take a pair with us instead of the big ones, because R. wants a dog some time and the big ones will never stand for that. We'll leave them with our maid Keti who loves them, and to whom they will be a source of income as Greeks love cats and think Siamese, which are almost nonexistent here, are wonderful. I am trying to sell most of the furniture as I understand one can get excellent buys around Charlotte, but certainly won't give it away. Will not sell my Fiat, as it is just too economical and practical to sell and then have to buy a big American car. We still haven't got ship's reservations but have high hopes. Of course the US Government is somewhat like the Greeks — it can never get anything done peacefully and reasonably ahead of time — with the difference that the US Government spends millions of dollars and actually thinks it is accomplishing things efficiently! (August 24, 1954)

I sold the ugly sofa and chair Mama had sent, and a lot of the other furniture, including the rattan stuff from Bombay, knowing it would be a while before I had a verandah or sunroom in which to put it in the US. But I kept Mama's beautiful dining room set, the bird's eye maple furniture, and Robin's teak set.

After I resigned we did some tripping. Not, unfortunately, as we had planned, to Turkey or Egypt — finances as usual. But we got three or four days in Mykonos, where among other things, on the imminent arrival of a thundering angry boar Robin and I hastily jumped the wall of a field we'd wandered into.

Robin and I are sneaking away for numerous long weekends and saying goodbye to our favorite spots here, and also seeing some for the first time... This weekend we had an unforgettable trip to Mykonos and Delos.... We went on an island boat, which was so

crowded you literally couldn't walk around the deck — people, goats, chickens, people, trunks, etc. They make absolutely no limits on ticket sales — or on how many times they sell the same berth. I estimate there were first class accommodations (equivalent to steerage anywhere else) for about 20 people — at least 100 jammed into the saloon.... However, we arrived at Mykonos at midnight, only to find our hotel reservations (made two weeks previously and telegraphically confirmed) were all off; they had never heard of us. So we stayed with some villagers. This was truly charming. They had no place for us but gave us their own “marriage bed” — they must have had some awfully rocky nights from the state of the mattress — in an inside room (no window) about 6 feet square and 16 feet high. We decided they built the house 2 stories high and then build the upstairs piecemeal as they can. Also there is no water on Mykonos except what a man brings around in a big can on a donkey cart. So we begged a glass of water to drink, and next day after Delos asked them to buy us a pitcher of water for bathing. This they did — about 3 quarts. So we took a bath in their kitchen. They were very sweet friendly people, and gregarious. The head of the household alleges he once visited Joliet, Illinois and while R and I were bathing (first R. and then me, with 3 quarts of water and of course fully clothed) the whole family stood around watching while the head of the house chewed my ear off in rapid Greek about Joliet. R. has a rather well-developed sense of privacy but we decided that when in Mykonos you do as the Mykonians do because you can't do otherwise. On Saturday we went to Delos, a little island about 2 kilometers from Mykonos. This was once a holy place for the ancient Greeks and is worth any discomfort to get there — really marvelous. We went in a motor launch about 40 feet long with about 20 other people. Mykonos is famous for its terrific winds which blow constantly. The boat was pitching and rolling to the point where you felt like you were on a Coney Island roller coaster, and of course we were soaked through.... Some Greek women — all the Greek women aboard — had to show their delicacy by getting violently ill. This is characteristic and I don't understand it in a maritime race, but there it is. Well, we saw Delos, and Mykonos itself is charming and picturesque although too touristy for my money. Coming back we got aboard the biggest and best of the island steamers. As soon as we were aboard

(lugging our own bags — porters are available after you get on and off but not for the brass-knuckly job of doing so), one of us sped to the cabin with the bags and grabbed our berth as if it were gold, hanging on like fury and beating off all other ticket holders for the same berth, while the other dashed to the saloon, spread belongings all over two chairs, and glared at anyone who had the nerve to even glance at said chairs. This is the way it's done and the polite person (as we once were) finds that he has bought first class tickets and is just lucky to get standing room next to the engine, not to mention food, water, etc. Well, there was the usual fasseria about the berths but we hung on. It was a 4-berth cabin, and we had a lower. The upper was occupied by a nice Greek girl who was with her husband but he had to berth elsewhere because this room was alleged to be only for “kyrias” (ladies). The other two berths had been sold five times but the winners appeared to be two old peasant women. They disappeared, returning only when the ship came into port, to sit on the berths like everyone else does, so that one's stuff won't be casually tossed out and someone else get it (berth and stuff). So after things had calmed down a bit we went up to the salon for a drink and some fresh air (the ventilator didn't work in the cabin and of course it was inside — I need not describe the joys of “sleeping” double in a berth 24 inches wide with a terrific sunburn!), and a rather good dinner. Then we decided to call it quits and went to bed. The girl above also went to bed. About one o'clock I woke up and someone else was in the room. I can't see well in the dark without my glasses but did observe that this was no peasant woman; this was a youngish man and he was very casually disrobing and then got into bed. Well, I know this is common practice in out of the way hotels around here and so on but was rather surprised about it on this “first class” ship. Besides, where were the old women? But decided to do nothing because complaints would get us nothing but a horselaugh. What had happened was that the old women had bought their berths and then sold them at double or triple afterwards. Next morning the girl above was a bit annoyed because after all if we were going to have mixed doubles why couldn't she at least have the protection of her husband? But the management of course shrugged its shoulders — can they help it if people resell their berths? Actually, all these things could be arranged efficiently, conveniently, and cheaply

— but, as in any other human activity, this would simply bore the Greeks to death. I am sure they have always been this way; I'll bet anything they got sick and tired of being the light of the ancient world and had to have the Peloponnesian Wars just to have something interesting going on. They are certainly that way about their politics — they were so bored with their stable government, which has been going on for about two years (had had about 21 in the previous 5 years), they didn't know what to do. You never do a thing without allowing double time — time for doing it and time arguing getting started and finishing up. It is individualism carried to the ultimate degree. I don't know whether I feel about Greece an endearment always touched with annoyance or annoyance always softened by endearment. They are so utterly charming in some ways — even this [disorder and argumentativeness] is a relief from the awful stolidity some other peoples are afflicted with.

Of course one shouldn't complain too much about the accommodations — our fare for the two of us from Mykonos to Athens, with berth but not counting meals, was $7., and one can do an awfully lot of sightseeing on a couple of hundred. We decided we must see these things now for it will be a long time before we get back to this part of the world. Also, Robin has developed quite an interest in archeology and ancient civilization and history — I feel it should be encouraged in this manner... and then when he is exposed to it as a deadly useless bore in school, he'll know there is more to it than that. (Ibid.)

And to Crete, with the Smiths. Harry had at long last been released from all the questioning in Washington and was back in Greece. But he played his cards close to his vest. He said nothing about his intention to resign. If he had, perhaps I would have asked him about the securities business and gotten some good cautionary advice.

We went to Crete last weekend, the last of our trips.... with one of my colleagues and his wife and 2 boys, all of whom are fine people and good companions.... [we] slept aboard while in port. The ship has only recently come under Greek management (it used to be the old “Princess Adelaide” which made the Seattle-Alaska run), and is still fairly clean, etc. Meals were good, and the whole things was very pleasant at least until the return trip when

we had the usual chickens running around in the first class salon, people sleeping, eating, getting sick all over the ship which was by that time crammed. But by now I don't care if no one makes the beds or cleans the john for four days, or if dinner is 2 hours late because the major domo has a business on the side which he's attending to ashore (he euchred half the tour into taking a special extra-charge tour of Canea to see the city, mosques, gardens, etc. We didn't go because we knew perfectly well we wouldn't get to Canea until after dark). As long as I can keep the goats out of our cabin, and as long as said cabin hasn't been sold half a dozen times over, it's a luxury cruise. And Knossos, the center of Minoan life, is simply magnificent. I have seen nothing in Greece, including the Parthenon, which impresses me more. The kids had a marvelous time until Willy Smith feel down a 30-foot hole at the ruins, then we had rescue party, rope, hospital [I being the only member of our party who spoke Greek had the job of explanations between the doctor and the Smiths], x-ray and general excitement but no broken necks, backs or bones, just fairly severe bruises and some shock. Which didn't stop Willy from giving us all near heart attacks when, on the return voyage, we spied him happily ensconced on the highest bit of the ship's rigging. (September 16, 1954)

We spent our last week back in the Pentelikon Hotel, the contents of our house having been packed up in lift vans. One evening at dinner there Robin and I got on the subject of compound interest. He was greatly impressed, and never forgot the principle.

Although I had allowed plenty of time for the process of packing up, getting tickets, and other things connected with leaving, the administrative services as usual mucked things up thoroughly, and the last few days were touch-and-go. I had to rely heavily on Robin to check on packing and so on at home, while I was at the office taking care of details there. On the last day, he had to make his way by taxi from the hotel to the Embassy. Poor child, he was only eleven years old.

One complication not caused by the administrative services had to do with taking the cats out of Greece. Apparently there was some rule against doing that. At last I went to

a sympathetic friend, a senior official in the foreign office, saying that I had brought two cats to Greece, I was leaving twelve cats in Greece (the assorted litters that had been born during our stay there), and that I thought I should be allowed to take two cats out of Greece. He agreed, and the cats came along with us.

I remember little of the voyage home. We must have had a stopover in Naples, whence we made the rest of the trip on the S.S. Constitution, a luxury cruise ship. I do remember being exhausted, more so than ever before.

By the time we landed in New York I was rested. My sister Pat met us at the dock, and after a two hour search for our luggage (it had been put in the “M” pile for second class, not the “S” pile for first class), we proceeded to the Lexington Hotel, where the Foreign Service had arranged for us to be put up. But going up in the elevator we were told in no uncertain terms that we couldn't have the cats with us. I knew that the Waldorf also made special prices for Foreign Service people, so we took off for the Waldorf. At the desk I asked if there was a kennel where we could board the cats. “Would you mind having them in your rooms?” No indeed! Then it turned out that they had no rooms, only a suite. They gave it to us for $8 per night. I have been a fan of the Waldorf ever since.

It was late afternoon when we finally got settled in. None of us had had anything to eat since breakfast, and Robin was famished. The New York School of Finance man was coming to take Pat and me out for dinner and the evening, so we called for room service for a good dinner for Robin, who would be safe enough in the Waldorf suite while Pat and I painted the town. It had been a rough day for poor Robin, so I told him he could order anything he liked from the menu. And he did. In half an hour or so arrived a biggish table loaded with at least eight courses. All of it looking delicious. Robin and the cats had an excellent dinner.

Next day we witnessed something rather interesting. We were sitting in “Paradise Alley,” a bar that ran along a corridor on the main floor of the hotel, when who should come

storming through but Vice President Nixon, Mrs. Nixon, and several members of their entourage. Nixon's face was a portrait of thunder; something had displeased him vastly. When Mrs. Nixon leaned toward him and whispered something, something conciliating I suppose, he shook her off by digging his elbow his arm into her chest. Always the gentleman, our Richard.

Next day we took off for Charlotte. En route I stopped for a few days in Washington to clear up some final bits of business, while Robin and the cats went on ahead with Pat. The bit of business I remember is “walking a check through.” It would in any case take some weeks before I would get my severance pay (if any, I don't remember) and retirement fund, but there was some smallish amount, a hundred dollars or so, for which I had immediate authorization but for which I could expedite actually getting the check by the walk-through. Needing cash, as always, I did so. The process took a full day; I must have gone to at least eight or ten offices, in State, in Treasury, and perhaps elsewhere. At the end of the process I got my check, and reached the conclusion that issuing it had cost the government at least its face amount. It would have cost the government no less, of course, had it been processed in the usual manner.

Postscript: I believe that over half my Foreign Service class had quit by the mid-1950s. Phil Habib and Pete Vaky stayed on, however, as did John Ausland, Patty Byrne, Cleo Noel and a few others. Cleo and Lucille McHenry had married and Lucille had of course then left the Service. A few years later Cleo became one of the first victims of terrorists, in the Sudan. I saw Patty in Washington a few years later. Her big problem then was “finding an administrative officer for Laos.” I wrote to her a couple of times thereafter, but Patty was apparently not much of a correspondent because I had no replies. In the mid-1980s I read in the newspaper that she was with the American delegation to the U.N. She must have retired not long thereafter.

Although I never really wanted to return to the Foreign Service as it has become, it was a great experience for me. Among other things, it taught me that I am irreversibly an

American, whatever the appeal of other countries. It also taught me skepticism about all the “regional security zones” and other “regional” pipe-dream of my later academic colleagues and some others. As a rule a country's worst and bitterest enemies have been its immediate neighbors (our own immense power by comparison with our neighbors had veiled this in the American case), and its most serious economic competitors.

What I didn't learn then — never did, really — was the ubiquitous reality of internal politics, i.e., within offices, how to get ahead by using these situations, and so on. Or maybe I just didn't care enough about that. It was the same later in academe.

To Greeks (and others) we Americans must have seemed liked innocent creatures from outer space, without gut comprehension of their ancient national feuds and claims, knowing next to nothing about them as they have been formed not only by the classic period but even more by the Hellenistic and particular the Byzantine and Turkish centuries. We had not the in-the-bones attitudes resulting from centuries of tragedy and bloodshed that is so common throughout the world. And until quite recently our own power has seemed as permanent to us as that of other Top Countries has seemed to them in the past.

I missed the chance of getting back to Greece when we were in Rome at the turn of the 70s. Since then I have been afraid to go back; from all reports it is no longer “my Greece,” and I would rather keep my Greece in memory than experience what I have been told is the present situation there. In a way this is selfish and unfortunate. Greece is no longer the desperately poor country it was then — perhaps that is one reason why it was so charming then. If the Greek people have opted for traffic and pollution, for millions of tourists swarming all over the place, for high rises along our street and replacing our little house in its olive grove, they are probably not wrong. But I shall continue to treasure “my Greece.”

End of interview